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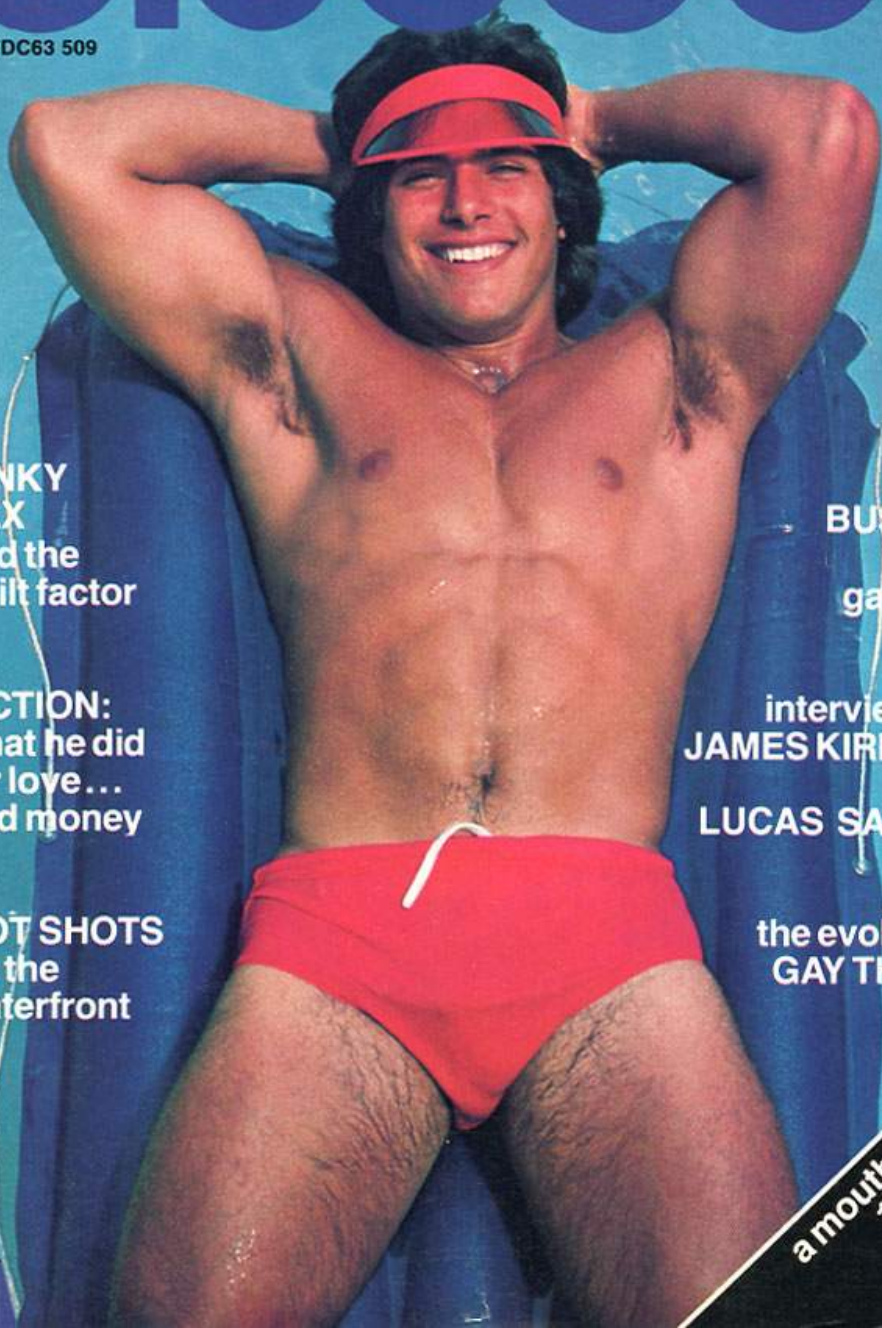
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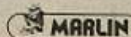
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MAY/78



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COMMENTARY

A GUEST EDITORIAL

In order to develop a continuing, meaningful dialogue between our readers and the community-at-large, we are inviting prominent, responsible spokespersons to share their views on America's changing lifestyle. Inquiries and responses should be directed to

Commentary, Blueboy Magazine,
185 N.E. 166th St., Miami, Fla. 33162.

THE CASE FOR PRIVACY/BY DUFFY LA CAVA



Duffy LaCava holds a B.A. in English (Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa) from Emory University and a Ph.D. in English from The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He has taught as an Associate Professor in southern universities, and is now a second-year law student at Indiana University where he is studying the laws which regulate sexual expression. Dr. LaCava is the present Vice-Chairman of the Bloomington Human Rights Commission.

SODOMY—Most gays are aware that the sodomy laws which are still on the books of many states make almost any form of sexual contact between members of the same sex a crime, usually a felony, punishable by one or more years of imprisonment. And many gays are also aware of the fact that oral-genital contacts between heterosexuals are also punishable under the same laws. But can you imagine a man being sentenced to prison for the "crime" of having his own wife felate him in the privacy of their own bedroom? I hope you find that result as absurd and as alarming as I do, but unfortunately that is exactly what happened in a recent Virginia criminal prosecution.

That the sodomy laws are used to oppress homosexuals is well known. The fact that they also pose an intolerable threat to the privacy of heterosexuals, even married couples, even within their own bedrooms, can and should be used more effectively by gays to gather political support from straights in the fight to secure the privacy and dignity of us all. Though the Courts have not been very sympathetic to the arguments, the case for privacy, as an effective barrier to the sodomy laws, grows stronger by the day.

First, we need to take a look at the Constitutional doctrine of privacy to see what it means and where it comes from. A careful reading of the United States Constitution and all its amendments will not turn up a single reference to any "right of privacy." It is not one of the specifically enumerated rights which are guaranteed to us. The

right to privacy was only recently recognized (some say "created") by Supreme Court decisions, beginning with the case of *Griswold v. Connecticut* in 1965. In that case the Justices based their recognition of the right of privacy on three related arguments. First, as Justice Douglas held, the specific guarantees of the Bill of Rights such as the Fourth Amendment's "right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures" and the First Amendment's "right of the people peaceably to assemble" all assume a greater and more basic right of privacy—the right to be left alone in one's life without unwarranted intrusions by the government.

Similarly, Justice Harlan held that the right of privacy was one of the basic values "implicitly in the concept of ordered liberty." That is, the liberty which the Constitution is supposed to guarantee to us means nothing unless it protects a basic core right to be ourselves. What possible meaning could the word liberty have if there were no privacy? It is depressing to note, however, that Justice Harlan specifically denied the protection of privacy to "adultery, fornication, and homosexual

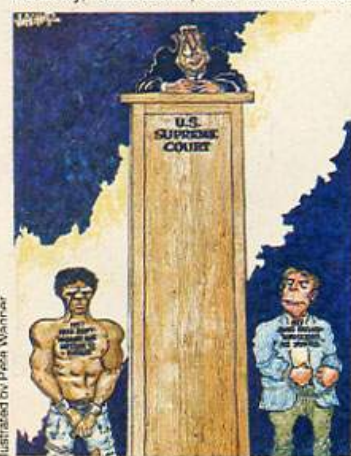
practices."

Finally, Justice Goldberg pointed out that the Ninth Amendment says that "the enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." Thus, just because the Constitution does not specifically list the right of privacy as one guaranteed to the people, that does not mean that such a right does not exist and should not be recognized and protected by the Court.

But what does this right of privacy mean? It is most certainly not absolute, as can easily be seen from the following examples: a murder, no matter how privately committed, will not be shielded by a right of privacy. A man's home is not his castle beyond the reach of the law if he commit assault, print counterfeit money, or make bombs in it. The Courts have gone along with Justice Harlan and have included homosexual sodomy, and most heterosexual sodomy as well, among the crimes which cannot be protected by the right of privacy. But the right of privacy itself has evolved through court decisions on cases which dealt with sexual relationships, and an analysis of those decisions shows that such a differentiation is untenable. Once the right of privacy has been recognized by the government, once the police and prosecutors are forbidden to enter the bedroom and regulate the sexual conduct enjoyed there, then it can make no rational difference whether the two consenting adults are married or unmarried, of the same sex or of opposite sexes.

The *Griswold* case dealt with a Connecticut law which banned the sale of contraceptives. It was held to be unconstitutional because it invaded the privacy of a relationship which Justice Douglas described as "a coming together for better or for worse, hopefully enduring, and intimate to the degree of being sacred. The association promotes a way of life, not causes; a harmony in living, not political faiths; a bilateral loyalty, not commercial or social projects. Yet it is an association

(Continued on page 35)



Illustrated by Peter Wanner

TRY HARDER, HE SAYS

Loved your beautiful, tempting January cover! Hated your sorry "Bed Shots." Sure, Roger is built and looks good, but I am so fucking tired of seeing him in Blueboy's pages. Joe and Jeremy both were obliterated in sunshine. Nice effect, but I want to see them, not the sun and shadow shit. I pay for photos, not "light shows." I also pay for photos of men, not toy boats. What a waste of useful space. At first glance, I thought it was a story or photoessay of crotch shots on an ocean liner. Holy shit, I was disappointed again. Anyway, I close by saying I haven't lost faith in you, only a hard.

David Jones, Jacksonville, Fla.



IS THAT YOU, MARY?

Thank you for the informative article by Jay-Garfield Watkins on human rights in Great Britain. I've often wondered what the conditions were like for gays in one of the most tolerant nations in the world. Sorry to see that they have as much of a struggle on their hands as we here in America. Is the Mary Whitehouse mentioned in "An Orange Tree Grows in England" the same person that Pink Floyd sings about in "Pigs (Three Different Ones)" on their album *Animals*? In the song, they sing:

Hey you, Whitehouse
Ha, ha charade you are ...
You're trying to keep our
feelings off the street
You're nearly a real treat,
All tight lips and cold feet
And do you feel abused?
Mary, you're really a treat
But you're really a cry.

Sounds like the same person to me.

E.L., Louisville, Ky.

(Editor's Note: Pink Floyd's American management representative agrees with you.)

PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSY?

Authors like Dan Curzon ("Do We Need a Wholesome Gay Literature?") can serve a valuable purpose by reminding us that problems will always exist in the gay community.

But many gays cannot identify with toilet sex, bar cruising, and constant police harassment. They live quiet lives, go to work, pay taxes, and live with a lover for many years. Curzon implies that his vision of gay life is the only accurate reflection of the way things are. All other gay life styles are artificial to him.

When Curzon picks at Patricia Warren's novels I strongly suspect professional jealousy. *The Front Runner* has gone through several printings and has sold 450,000 copies. She is handled by a major publisher. Curzon's first novel, *Something You Do In The Dark*, although gripping and well-written, was an enormous flop.

Obviously, many gay readers are gaining inspiration from Patricia Warren which Dan Curzon cannot provide.

Frank J. Howell
Book Reviewer
Bay Area Reporter
San Francisco, California

RECOMMENDATION FROM CHICAGO

I wish to recommend a new disco here in Chicago that would rate a mention in the "Top 20." It's called Center Stage and is located at 3730 N. Clark St. This multi-level complex features not only a disco, but live cabaret shows, a men's fashion boutique and Victory Gardens Theatre for legitimate stage productions. Their forte is not only their sound equipment and DJs, but their unique light show, which features animated projections on screens and ceiling, multi-colored ballroom lights and 4-color laser beam dancing lights. After tripping the light fantastic, one can go to the lower level for live, professional entertainment in the cabaret, called Stage II. I submit the Center Stage of Chicago for mention.

S.C., Chicago, Illinois

TELL IT LIKE YOU SEE IT

Now don't think I'm trying to tell you your business, but I want to give you my views. I'd get a subscription to Blueboy, but I don't make much money. I do like to read letters written by other readers. Unfortunately, I can't agree with Mr. Remington's views about Ms. Morera's column. Sure, she may not see or hear all that goes on, but she writes a dynamic column. In her article (What's Hot), she told it the way she saw it. That's all anyone can do.

I'm now separated because my ex-old lady didn't understand my lifestyle. She knew when we got married that I was gay, but she decided that she was going to make me straight. She never accomplished her objective, and now she lives with three other gals who are all gay. Hopefully, she will learn about gay living with three other gay people. I've got another girlfriend who doesn't know about me yet, and I'm not about to tell her. Why give her something to worry about beforehand? She doesn't tell me what she does when I'm not there, and if she wants to go to bed with someone else (man or woman), so be it. I don't see that it bothers or should harm me in any way.

R.G.M., Osage City, Kansas

A MIDWEST BEST

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The Hunt & The Chase
Indianapolis, IN



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GAYS AGAINST GAYS

This is a response to a reader named Jon Remington (Blueboy, Jan. 1978) who found it offensive that you have a female writing for a gay publication. He also referred to transvestites and other flamboyant gays as "unfortunate gay stereotypes."

As a gay male, very feminine and very militant, I'm very tired of many gays' attitude toward transvestites. We get looked at and at times laughed at by "Straight-looking" gays. We are getting the same treatment by our own people that gays in general got in the early years. I want to remind everyone that we are all gay and all fighting for rights and liberation. But it gets frustrating when your straight friends reject you, parents and relatives reject you and then your own people reject you. It's aggravating when you walk miles and miles on Gay Rights Day, stand up in protests, just to find out that transvestites, gay women and gay men are all fighting for their separate rights. There are a lot of hypocrites in the gay community. They cry about discrimination and then they turn around and discriminate against their own kind.

I am fighting for my own personal rights and the rights of every living gay. We all should. It's the only way we'll win. I surely hope that Jon and people like him stay home on Gay Rights Day. I'd hate to see him marching. It's about time for all gays to look at each other as brothers and sisters, protect each other and be proud of each other. As far as a female writing about gay men — why not? Where does it say you have to be gay to write about one? As we say in Manhattan — "Go on!" Ms. Daniela Morera — go on! Brooklyn Heights is only a "Gay's Graveyard" anyway.

Micky, New York City

OVER 35 AND PROUD

In the November issue of BLUEBOY I came across an editorial survey. I started to answer the questions but in thinking about them I began to wonder if I wasn't caught up in the throes of paranoia. Let's face it, I'm an aging gay! I'm sexually active and I'm reasonably well satisfied with gay life. Yet as I come in contact with gay publications, I seem to sense a policy of editorial euthanasia that eliminates those unfortunates, such as myself, who have reached 35 and beyond. We may be referred to in passing much like relics of a gay "Christmas Past," but generally, like Scrooge's ghost, we have no substance. We find page upon page of photo spreads, stories, articles, and reports primarily concerned with a youth cult. The vast number of us who have passed on into

more "mature" years are in practice forgotten.

One of the brutal, but inevitable, facts of life is that we all must age; at 20 it seems remote, at 30 it's a possibility, at 40 it's a certainty. However, the gay media consistently zeroes in on youth(s). Be assured that I'm not lacking appreciation for and interest in the young males of the world. On the contrary, they always have and always will command my attention. Yet we all know countless guys 35 and beyond who maintain their bodies and appearance and who must be considered "sharp" and "with it" by any count. Many of them are truly super dudes who could well be examples for others. With intelligence



and insight, many have found the way to age wisely and gracefully. Unfortunately, we also find too many fools who delude themselves into thinking they are still "chicken." Many are frightened that they are losing whatever appeal they may have had, while in truth, if one will admit to it, a mature guy is often one hell of a lot better lay.

My basic reaction to BLUEBOY is quite positive. The photos and written material always appear to maintain a high level of quality. In reading the publication, I don't feel intellectually insulted or assaulted. Yet, here is my paranoia surfacing again. I would appreciate a little more balance. Perhaps an occasional photo spread on some of those "super dudes" who have passed 30 or even 40. Perhaps some articles and/or fiction dealing with the concerns and problems of the older gay. Even wardrobe and grooming recommendations that would point up how an older guy can be current without appearing to be a caricature of flaming youth. In essence, my premise is really quite simple: continue the focus on youth, but don't, through neglect, assign those of us past 35 to complete oblivion.

D.F., Michigan

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FILMS BY WALTER VATTER

The setting for *The Best Way* is a French boys' camp where two counselors find themselves in conflict with each other. One is Marc (played by Patrick Dewaere), the easy-going, virile athletic director. And the other is Philippe (played by Patrick Bouchitey), a more complicated and sensitive man who teaches drama at the summer camp, and who also happens to be the son of the camp's headmaster.

The movie was written and directed by Claude Miller, a seasoned film maker who has worked since 1965 as assistant director and director of production under Jean-Luc Godard and Francois Truffaut, among others. This fine film is Miller's first — on his own — and is an accolade to his experience with some of the masters.

The Best Way opens in a rainstorm, which eventually cuts off the camp's electricity. In looking for more candles, Marc steps into Philippe's room, unannounced and unexpected, and finds Philippe dressed as a woman. Thus ensues the problem. Philippe fears Marc will give him away, identify him as a homosexual to the other counselors, and attempts to belittle Marc intensely in a campaign to prove his worth as a person. Marc is drawn to Philippe, but cannot get too close for fear of his own inviolable masculinity. So Marc goes about torturing Philippe to keep him away.

Philippe has a girl friend, Chantal (played by Christine Pascal, a beautiful woman and competent actress). From time to time, Chantal visits Philippe at the camp. On her next Sunday visit, after the incident between Philippe and Marc, Philippe seduces Chantal for the first time, but fails to make love to her. She understands him and remains true to him. With Chantal on the scene, Marc is driven to even more craziness in his psychological warfare against Philippe. Finally, at summer's end, there is a costume party to which Philippe wears his dress and makes physical, sexual ad-



A brilliant movie about male relationships, with Patrick Dewaere (above) and Patrick Bouchitey.



"The Duellists" — in a class with "Elvira Madigan" and "Barry Lyndon."

vances to Marc. All hell breaks loose, for the two men have pushed each other to their limits. In the final scene, an epilogue in this movie, Philippe and Chantal, still together, are shown in a vacant apartment in Paris. Marc is the realtor. The men acknowledge each other as old buddies from camp, but no mention is made of what happened. Only when they squirm in deciding who will hold the door for whom, in leaving the apartment, do we know the problem is still unresolved in their minds.

Both young men, fairly new to the movies, give high quality performances. Their fine acting, combined with the considerable talents of Mr. Miller, make for a brilliant movie about male relationships.

The Best Way was nominated for six French Academy Awards. I'm sure it will be a popular film here in the United States too.

There are two guaranteed rewards for going to *The Duellists* — seeing the locations and seeing the actors. The story and the acting? Well, there's not much of a story to begin with, and my evaluation of some of the acting can be covered with the word "surprise." But I cannot emphasize strongly enough what a magnificently beautiful film this is to watch. It is in a class with *Elvira Madigan* and *Barry Lyndon*.

Besides all the beautiful scenery and some of the finest, most glamorous cinematography I have ever seen, *The Duellists* is a movie brimming over with blood and gore. The script is based on a short story by Joseph Conrad, who created all the incessant, reasonless dueling between Napoleonic officers (played by Keith Carradine and Harvey Keitel) to represent the irrational forces of hatred and vengeance.

Harvey Keitel is quite wonderful in his role as the duellist who won't relent, won't give up the fight until someone is dead. He looks perfect for the part and makes terrific contact with the camera as his eyes glaze over with contempt



Carradine and Keitel as Hussar officers in Napoleon's army.



Keith Carradine

and a kind of seemingly simple-minded delight. Keith Carradine, on the other hand, looks absolutely gorgeous and acts without self-consciousness or clumsiness; but his lines come out like wisecracks and his movements make him seem more cuddly than military.

The locations for *The Duellists* were London, Scotland and the Perigord region of France where the forests are thick and the towns and estates unblemished by either age or modernization. The way in which director Ridley Scott and director of photography Frank Tidy have captured all that lushness and contrasted it with the unquestionably realistic duels between these two men is simply phenomenal.

Don't see *Mr. Klein* the night you're in the mood for a barrel of laughs, for a barrel of laughs it is not. *Mr. Klein* is an adventure story, a history lesson, and a horrendous experience at its conclusion.

The year is 1942. Mr. Klein is a forty-year-old fine arts dealer who lives in Paris, unmarried and a French catholic. A bon vivant, he lives for wine, women and the finer things in life. Much to his consternation, he discovers there is a second Mr. Klein in Paris, a Jew who has gone underground and confused his identity with the first Mr. Klein in order to operate unnoticed in anti-Nazi resistance activities. An adventurer who values his personal freedom even above the money so necessary to his hedonistic lifestyle, the first Mr. Klein becomes obsessed in his search for the second Mr. Klein. That search is the activity of this movie. Much like following a shadow blindly into utter darkness and losing the image completely, the first Mr. Klein loses himself in his search.

Mr. Klein is a movie with a plot. Its intricately executed direction — by Joseph Losey — teamed with Alain Delon's dynamic performance as Mr. Klein and the two supporting roles of Juliet Berto, who plays Mr. Klein's lover, and Jeanne Moreau, who is connected with the second Mr. Klein, make this a movie that is captivating and satisfying. *Mr. Klein* is intrigue and character at its best.



Alain Delon and Jeanne Moreau in a film of adventure, intrigue and horror.



"High Anxiety" sends in the clowns.

A better group of clowning actors you couldn't ask for. In his latest funny movie, *High Anxiety*, Mel Brooks brings us Madeline Kahn, Cloris Leachman and Harvey Korman. Of course Mel Brooks acts in the movie too. He also wrote the screenplay (along with Ron Clark, Rudy DeLuca and Barry Davidson), directed, produced and composed the music and lyrics for the title song, which he sings in the style of Frank Sinatra.

High Anxiety is Brooks' personal tribute to the genius of Alfred Hitchcock. While the story itself isn't at all reminiscent of anything Mr. Hitchcock ever did, there are visual references in this knee-slapping comedy to scenes from some of Hitchcock's classics, *Vertigo*, *Psycho*, and *The Birds*.

The story line concerns a Harvard professor and psychiatrist (played by Mel Brooks) who comes to Los Angeles to take over the administration of the Psycho-Neurotic Institute for the very, very nervous. He's terrified of heights, a useful neurosis on which to hang a lot of hilarious elements in this film. He also threatens the territory of the institute's head nurse, Nurse Diesel (played by Cloris Leachman with a make-up job you won't believe), and the institute's assistant director, Dr. Montague (played by Harvey Korman). As the story develops, we learn that Nurse Diesel and Dr. Montague have a bizarre sexual relationship. Prepare yourself for Cloris Leachman, dressed as a Nazi, spanking Harvey Korman, who is bound and gagged in her closet and wearing pajamas.

The action quickly moves to San Francisco for a psychiatric convention where the lovely and funny Victoria Brissane (played by Madeline Kahn) comes into the picture. A love story, of sorts, ensues.

I think everything that Mel Brooks does is funny, so funny that sometimes the actual gags (the obvious slap-stick kind of sequences) distract the ongoing, under-current flow of comedy. To write about too many specific scenes in a movie like this would be giving it away, and I don't want to spoil it for you. Don't miss Mel Brooks' *High Anxiety*.



Mel Brooks



Brooks under attack in "High Anxiety."



Kahn as Victoria Brissane.

THE CREAM

film and
record reviews

RECORDS BY DALLAS

BETTE MIDLER/*Broken Blossom* (Atlantic)

With this, the release of her fifth album, Bette Midler graduates from camp to class. Replacing "kitchy" remembrances of things past with authenticity, Midler takes nostalgia to a new dimension — performing old songs as if *then* were now. With one exception, each of the eleven cuts on this album is a technicolor Hollywood production for the ear. Midler isn't a rock artist (which has plagued her and Atlantic for 10 these many moons); she is, however, a chanteuse, in the tradition of the traveling minstrel — or Edith Piaf. She is an actress in song, and as such triumphs. Her performance of *La Vie En Rose* is ethereal — like Piaf's — and street.

Broken Blossom is marred only by the closing cut. Midler would do herself justice to refrain from performances that consist of little more than uncontrolled hysterics. On each of her albums she (or someone) insists one such cut be included. Obviously this is her definition of hard rock. It doesn't work. But let's not split red hairs. A lot of growth is evident on this album; an intelligent choice of material and a voice that has gained sophistication in its maturity.

BOZ SCAGGS/*Down Two Then Left* (Columbia)

The release of Scaggs' new album — for which he made us wait nearly two years — poses the interesting question: How many masterpieces are we allowed to expect from one career? I say this because if the public is, as am I, instantly disappointed with this album, it is because the last, *Silk Degrees* (which is now three platinum — 3 million units sold) is such a perfect R&B classic, with four hit singles to its credit, that it remains almost unapproachable in quality. On one hand it is, unfair to expect him to be able to top it — or even match it. On

the other hand, we as listeners, record buyers, critics, set our standards on past performance. The new album's material is not as strong, but it does contain some great Scaggs originals; of particular note are *Hollywood*, *Hard Times*, and *Still Falling for You*.

ROBERTA FLACK/*Blue Lights in the Basement* (Atlantic)

This album marks the return of the Roberta Flack we all know and love. Her vocal elegance permeates this fine collection of songs. *After You*, from the film *Mahogany*, is more beautiful here, as is *This Time I'll Be Sweeter* (previously recorded by Martha Reeves). *Soul Deep* is a joy — the kind of sound made famous in the early 60's by the Chiffons — but the real wonder comes from *Where I'll Find You*, a magic piece of music with a moving, spiritual performance that can match (if not top) Flack's classic, *The First Time Ever...*

ANDY GIBB/*Flowing Rivers* (RSO)

Baby brother to the Bee Gee's, Andy Gibb took to stardom like a trooper. Just 19 years old, his first single from this album, *I Just Want to Be Your Everything* (written for him by big brother Barry) went straight to the number one position and has already been certified gold. And though it is a great cut, it is by no means the album's best. The rest of the songs were written by Andy, including the best cuts, which are *Words and Music*, and *Too Many Looks in Your Eyes*.

FREDA PAYNE/*Stares and Whispers* (Capitol)

In the beginning, Freda was one of the great vocalists in the limited world of the

jazz arena. She forsook it for the big time and on Invictus Records she went solid gold — several times. Since then, Freda floundered from one minor label to another. At last she has landed on a major label and hopefully they will restore her golden voice to golden record status. Judging by the instant reception that clubs have given *Love Magnet* and *Master of Love*, the album seems destined to do the lady justice.

DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES/*Beauty on a Back Street* (RCA)

There's a rumor circulating about these two men. Believe it. It's true. They are good! They write and perform catchy melodies underlined with hard, driving rhythms reminiscent of the best sex rock of the 60's — Vanilla Fudge and Jim Morrison. This is a collection of hot music for hot tastes. *Bigger than Both of Us* is the standout cut, but check out the lyrics to *Love Hurts* (*Love Heals*). *Bad Habits and Infection* — on which Mr. Hall wails, "come to me, I am the doctor" — closes the album leaving the listener with the feeling that a new exponent of the rock has been cut: Macho Rock.

DONNA SUMMER/*Once Upon a Time* (Casablanca)

Here it is. A two-record set for the insatiable. Now Disco Dollies can O.D. on Donna! *Once Upon a Time* (as if you hadn't heard it by now) is a contemporary fairy tale set to the disco beat; a full-length narrative cleverly presented in four "acts," packaged in a glossy, laminated, art-directed-to-death double cover. The whole is hypnotic (if not redundant) but on "act" three, Summer gets the chance to diversify more than she has been permitted to in the past, and delivers some solid R&B vocals. "Act" four, however, has the hits — *I Love You* and *Happily Ever After*.



Bette Midler



Boz Scaggs



Roberta Flack



Andy Gibb



John Oates

WHAT'S HOT NEW YORK

Photo: CBS Archives



William S. Paley, Chairman of the Museum of Broadcasting

by peter thomas

CBS's legendary Chairman of the Board, WILLIAM S. PALEY, has been made Chairman of The Museum of Broadcasting, the first American museum dedicated to the study and preservation of the more than 50-year history of radio and television broadcasting.

Through the cooperation of all the networks and of public broadcasting, The Museum maintains a rapidly growing collection of significant radio and television programs from the 1920's to the present, ranging from broadcast speeches by all the Presidents of the United States since WARREN G. HARDING to the dancing "Old Gold" cigarette commercials; from JUDY GARLAND'S radio debut at the age of 12 to

MARTIN LUTHER KING'S March on Washington; from World War II propaganda broadcasts of "TOKYO ROSE" to the early *Amos & Andy* series.

Open between noon and 5 pm Tuesdays through Saturdays, The Museum allows visitors — for a nominal contribution of \$1 — to monitor their selections on custom-designed broadcast consoles. The Museum also maintains a library of rare radio and television scripts, as well as books and periodicals on broadcasting.

It's worth a trip to New York just to view Jackie Kennedy's *Tour of the White House*, the 1962 TV special that made her a star. (Trivia collectors note: it was originally aired on Valentine's Day.)

The Museum of Broadcasting, 1 East 53 Street, (212) 752-4690.

Photo: Museum of Broadcasting



Broadcast consoles at the museum's Study Center.

Old King Cole has had a face lift. As part of the total refurbishing of the Old King Cole restaurant at the St. Regis-Sheraton Hotel (where Mick Jagger and Salvador Dali live when in New York — no, not together), the magnificent MAXFIELD PARRISH mural had a half-inch of nicotine and grime removed from its surface, while the rest of the restaurant underwent changes of a similar nature. Said GEORGE LANG, who designed the project with PIROSKA SAVANY, "We kept only the ceiling — it is perfect

Art Deco — and the Maxfield Parrish mural — a shrine — and worried about everything else, from the elaborate lighting to the bread deliveries."

The room, strikingly done in "special white" outlined in brass railings, has four step-up levels, insuring everyone a ringside seat. *New York Magazine's* graphic designer, MILTON GLASER, friend to Mr. Lang, designed the china, which, like the rest of the restaurant, is a beauty. Reservations are required. The King Cole Restaurant, 2 East 55 St., (212) 753-4500.



A facelift for Maxfield Parrish's 1906 mural.

The calla lilies are in bloom again, but now they're available in clay pots, as are — for the first time — ranunculus, anemones, and lilies-of-the-valley. PERRIWATER, LTD., a new flower shop near the United Nations, features "flowers as art." Example: an arrangement of all-white flowers fits snugly around a bottle of Dom Perignon. Price for both, \$60. Example: arrangement of cut bulb flowers in a mushroom basket sells for \$25.

Owned and operated by PATRICIA COOGAN and Zoli model DENIS LA MARSH, PERRIWATER, LTD., is like the promise of spring — it specializes in surprise.

PERRIWATER, LTD., 900 First Avenue, (212) PL9-9313.

I do know that when EDITH BEALE sings for her supper, she means big business. Cousin to JACKIE ONASSIS and star of the brilliant film *Grey Gardens*, Miss Edith

appeared at Reno Sweeney taking her first step in the enactment of a life-long fantasy of becoming a nightclub entertainer. What some people refer to as courage, I, in this instance, see as innate charisma. Edith is so special, so sincere, she just might reinstate honesty in show business. Judging by the

overwhelming critical and popular response, La BEALE has much to look forward to. Critics groped for superlatives in an attempt to describe the self-revelatory tapestry that this authentic eccentric unraveled before the public.

Keep your eyes peeled for EDIE BEALE, the Sarah Bernhardt of cabaret.

Will the "Showplace of the Nation" become a showcase?



Photo: Casablanca Records & Filmworks Inc.

DoubleTake: COULD DONNA SUMMER REALLY SAVE RADIO CITY?

When the announcement to permanently close Radio City Music Hall ("The Showplace of the Nation") hit the front pages of New York's dailies, everyone had to look twice. According to Radio City's administrative offices,

the decision was reached due to "serious financial operating deficits" and they reported that on the night prior to the announcement only 100 customers were in the 6,000 seat theatre. What do they expect when they're running a Helen Reddy movie?

The death date for this landmark has been set for

April 12, and while City Hall scrambles for a solution, I offer two:

1) Casablanca Records and FilmWorks, who have achieved the impossible more than once, should buy the building and turn it into Radio City Casbah, giving them an exclusive showcase for their own recording stars like DONNA SUMMER. (This principle was used in movies' golden era when studios like MGM owned the Loew's moviehouse chain.)

2) Since it was rumored for some time that the film version of *The Wiz* which stars DIANA ROSS and MICHAEL JACKSON and every black star who ever was, would open at Radio City as the Christmas 1978 attraction, why not follow through and put together the first all-black Christmas pageant to accompany the screen feature? Not only is a black version of *anything* big business these days, but this would give us what the world needs now ... Black Rockettes! 84 black beauties in tap shoes high kicking to *Ease on Down the Road*.



Program for the Music Hall.



by bruce werner

Last month, we all felt just a little Chinese. It's not quite the same as equal time, but this month, we all feel a bit Japanese. It's Spring and time for the ELEVENTH ANNUAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL. So climb into your kimono, unwrap your obi, grab your fan and parasol (or your Samurai sword, if you're into a military trip) and come on down to Nihonmachi — Japantown, that is — be-

WHAT'S HOT FRANCISCO

The Cherry Blossom Festival...largest of its kind outside Japan.



Photos: Cherry Blossom Festival Committee

tween April 13 and 23.

The festival is the largest of its kind outside of Japan, and draws visitors from all over the world. Last year about 700 people flew here just to participate and there will be close to a thousand this year.

There'll be exhibits, demonstrations and programs that lend light to just about every aspect of Japanese life, as it is in Japan and the United States: Art and calligraphy, flower arranging and tea ceremony classes, even origami (paper sculpting —

what else?) and the beautiful and haunting sounds of the Koto (That's kind of a Japanese version of a zither) and the Taiko, the ancient ceremonial drums.

For those of you who like the rough stuff, there will be a number of martial arts displays. If you've never witnessed it, you should. It's mayhem at its civilized best. First they bow, then say a prayer (I would too!), then proceed to kick the living shit right out of each other. Never have figured out how, but no

one ever seems to get hurt. Just about every school of Japanese combat will be represented, with Aikido, Karate, Taikudo, Judo, and Kendo. Each one is unique unto itself, but they are all fun and exciting to watch.

The whole shebang climaxes on the last day — April 23 — with the dai gyoretsu. Literally, that means "moving street show." It's the big parade! It will start around 1:00 PM at the Civic Center, ending 15 blocks later.



Rough stuff (above) and

kid stuff figure in the spectacle.



Photo: S.F. Convention & Visitors Bureau

WHAT'S HOT

at Japan Center. Over 1,800 people took part in it last year, and it ought to be better this time, with everything from just plain marchers (if you can call Geishas in full drag and Samurai in full regalia "plain") to the huge portable shrine carried on the backs of 50 or so men who believe it brings good luck only if it's tilted, tossed, raced from one side of the street to the other, and just generally banged around. There will be, of course, flower bedecked floats, complete with beauty queens, including Miss Japan.

This city's full of little nooks and crannies, parks, plazas and outdoor cafes. Embarcadero Center, with its flying bridges two stories up, each one covered with tables and brightly colored umbrellas, is one place to have the first outdoor lunch of Spring. Or keep walking and check out the merchandise the street vendors have on display in Villancourt Plaza behind the Hyatt Regency. Or go over yet another walking bridge and sit on the grass in front of the Alcoa Building at Maritime Plaza. Or keep going a little further and plunk your buns down beside the delightfully delicate fountain in the small park beside Golden Gateway Center.

Or go up to Polk Street and try any one of a number of the outdoor cafes there. You can sit and watch the street, enjoying anything from hot espresso to cold beer, pizza to escargot.

AND THERE ARE NEW CLOTHES. With our almost-constant temperature, we don't go through the yearly ritual of dragging out the winter wardrobe and putting

away the summer one, and vice versa. Still, we do bow to style from time to time just like the rest of the world.

Disco and disco clothing aren't all that new anymore, but they're still hot as ever. This is only half way a San Francisco story, but it bears mentioning.

Recently, a couple of New Yorkers passed through town. Their names are Jerry Rice and Steve Helfer. They have started a company called "Easy Trading Ltd.," based in New York.

They represent a number of designers (people like



Boogie britches from "Easy Trading, Ltd."



Nolan Drummond, David Leong, Barbara Scott, and Bruce Kay, to name a few) and concentrate on selling to stores and boutiques with a largely gay clientele. The clothes tend toward the sleazy side — uh, that's "good" sleazy — and lend themselves nicely to a night of dancing and debauchery.

Made primarily of all-cotton or synthetics, they show off what you've got pretty well, or cover it up if you've got a little too much, and dry out fast if they get wet. How you get them wet is your business. Most of the items have at

least one pocket, so you have a place for your money, your stash, your poppers, or whatever — leaving your hands free for dancing or drinking or groping.

Aside from the side-laced disco pants in everything from combed cotton to parachute nylon, they have vests for men and women, a number of disco accessories like glowsticks and a tambourine that glows in the dark, and a full line of shorts, many with open or zippered sides. I especially like their clear plastic shorts, trimmed with reflecting orange tape. Jerry says they're good for "losing weight around the hips while jogging or bike riding." Sure, Jerry.

Here in San Francisco, they can be seen at some of the best boutiques in town. *L'Uomo*, on 18th just above Castro, has a number of their styles that go nicely with that store's basically Italian menswear. *The Trading Post*, on Folsom below Sixth, has also purchased a number of items, although theirs are more in keeping with the



L.A.

by peter english



Up on Polk: The Town Squire ...

Leather/Western/Levi dudes who prowl that part of town. Like I said, how you get 'em wet is your business...

Up on Polk, you'll find Easy Trading stuff at a couple quite dissimilar places. *The Town Squire*, at 1318 Polk, is probably the oldest men's store on the street. It's been in the same location for 17 years — that must be some kind of a

record. They have everything for the male animal, from white boxer shorts right up to a full line of imported suits. Lots of wood, antique light fixtures, an upper-floor arcade that has a hair stylist — there's even a travel agency hidden away there somewhere. Be sure you take a look at the hand-painted doors on the changing booths

while you're there. The sales people are warm, friendly — and seem to know their way around fashion and coordination pretty well.

Leather Forever, 1738 Polk, used to be a little shop on Washington Street that specialized in chaps, jackets, caps, and other motorcycle gear. But Gordon, the owner/manager, wasn't satisfied. Using his talents, and helped along by his own basic amiability, he's now moved to a larger place with a full line of menswear. Tee-shirts in every color, shorts, jump suits, jackets, accessories like sun glasses and wrist bands — casual/disco/cruising gear of all kinds, he's got it. He still carries "regulation" leathers (and the other kinds of "accessories" as well), but there's a whole lot more to the place these days. Prices at *Leather Forever* are within reason, too. Drop in and ask Gordon about the giant economy size "Lube" next time you're in town and on Polk Street.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE MONTH AWARD: To the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire. It will be 72 years ago on April 18 that we had our last "big one," as we call them. Quite a time was had: 700 missing or killed, half the city burned to the ground, over \$300 millions worth of damage.

We'll "honor" the event down at the Ramrod (on Folsom, of course) the Sunday before, with the traditional showing of *San Francisco*. Clark will butcher it up and Jeanette will sing her little heart out, while we all stamp and cheer and cry at the end when the city rises like the Phoenix from its own ashes.

Recently someone gave me a shiny black cannister filled to the brim with Lube. I unscrewed the oversized jar and a moonscape of marsh-mellowy white matter smiled up at me. Lube is colorless, odorless, and made only of vegetable products. Lube is the perfect lubricant for sex, be it as heavy as fist-fucking or as routine as jerking off. It's a product that first appeared in California about six months ago with no overpowering announcement of its arrival. Lube began to infiltrate and immediately took its place in California gay culture as naturally as meat sauce takes to spaghetti. The 8709 Baths formerly used as much as four hundred pounds of Crisco a month that was supplied free to customers. Ever since the Lube Man Cameth to the 8709, crisco-maniacs have begun to be re-educated. For those people whose life has become permeated with crisco-skin, bed linen, and hair, the news is good: Lube is water soluble and biodegradable.

Alice through the Laundry Bag.

Deep in the heart of plaid-land West Hollywood, which is frequently referred to as "Gay Gulch" and "Fag Hollow", *Launderland* is an amusing place to meet the love of your life while you're washing the Lube out of your sheets. Open every day from 6 am to midnight, *Launderland*, on the corner of Santa Monica and Hayworth, boasts an exclusively male clientele plus Speed Queen



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Q. How does it work?
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Q. Why should I take Wilmont Herbal Blend?
A. The peak sexuality age for men is 18 to 20. After that our bodies produce smaller quantities of hormones. Disease, radical surgery, trauma, and the side effects of various drugs can also cause circulatory ills which interfere with normal sexual function. Wilmont Herbal Blend cleans and strengthens the urinary and sexual tracts so well that many customers tell us they achieve bigger, harder, prolonged erections with regular use. Other benefits are a higher energy level and increased sexual vitality.

Q. How long does it take?
A. Herbs, like vitamins, take a little time to work their wonders. Most men start feeling a renewed sexual vigor after 30 to 60 days. Thereafter, continued, regular use of Wilmont Herbal Blend will maintain the higher levels of sexual energy.

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WHAT'S HOT

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Heading for Head.

Michael Kaplan may well become the Adrian of the eighties. Arriving in Hollywood two years ago from a course in graphic design and illustration at the Philadelphia College of Art, Kaplan quickly found work as a sketch artist and worked for such designers as Bob Mackie and Ret Turner, turning out costumes for TV specials for the Jackson Five, Diana Ross, Ann Margret and Cher. From there he worked as assistant to Betsy Jones who was designing clothes for Casablanca's *Thank God It's Friday*, and was eventually referred to Bette Midler, by designer Bob De Mora, for whom he helped provide some of the costumes for her last American tour. "I put Bette Midler in Dr. Denton's," Kaplan proudly relates. With the Midler tour, he acquired Michael Black of I.C.M. as his agent, and since Black advises some of the industry's most sought-after performers, this

was a major achievement. His latest accomplishment has been designing the costumes for the Shields and Yarnell CBS TV series, and if Kaplan keeps working at this rate, Edith Head better watch out.

Safer at Safeway.

Perrier ice-cubes are the latest rage from Palm Springs. For Perrier needs, prime-cuts and prime cruising, the Safeway Market on Santa Monica, opposite the Beverly Hills Health Club, is the best place in town. Everybody does their market-ing there, and even if you don't need supplies, the Safeway parking lot is a favorite hangout for West Hollywood residents. Beware, concentration at the check-out is difficult.

Richard Gere



The Turning Point in Mr. Goodbar.

Richard Gere is a real Hollywood mystery man, shrouding himself in mists of secrecy similar to De Niro in the early stages of his career. If you saw *Looking For Mr. Goodbar*, Gere was the never-to-be-forgotten genius who performed a jock-strap ballet that

(Continued on page 27)

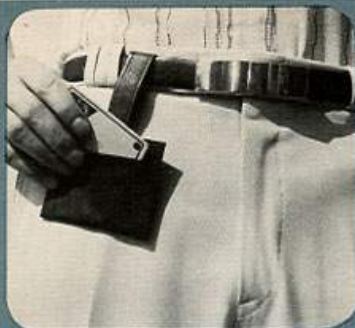


Michael Kaplan

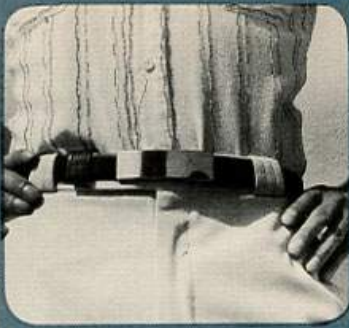
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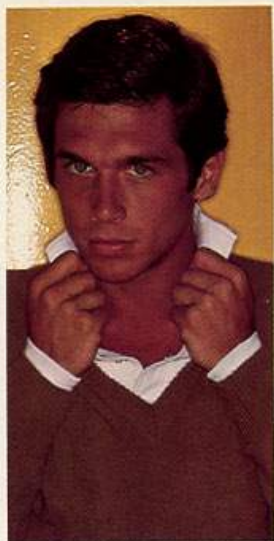
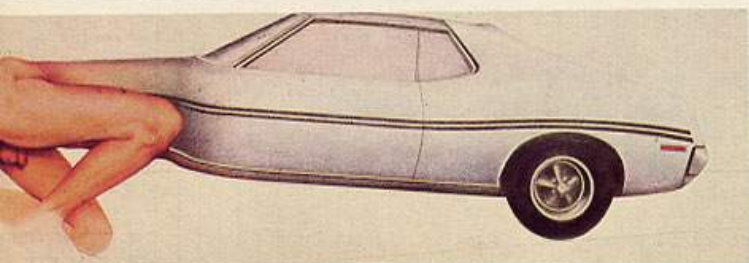
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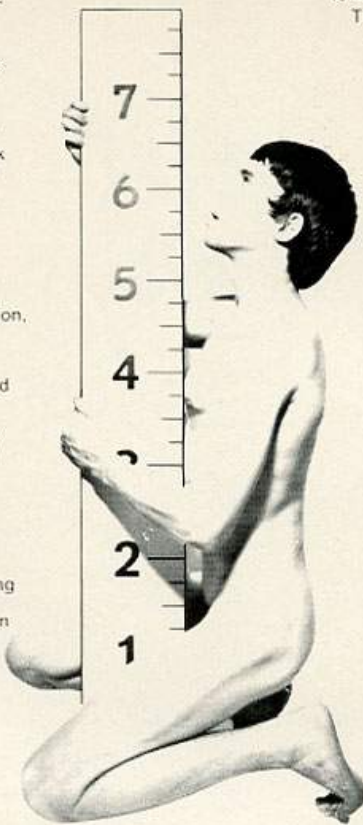
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WHAT'S HOT

(Continued from page 18)

got Diane Keaton crazy for more. Gere has shined before when he appeared on the London stage in the lead role in *Grease*. His American theatrical career has been fascinating and varied, including a Broadway performance as Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the role of Arthur in the U.S. premier of David Storey's *The Farm*. Gere has appeared in the movies *Report To The Commissioner*, and *Baby Blue Marine*. He will be appearing in two more films scheduled for release this year, Terry Malik's *Days of Heaven*, in which he plays the lead, and a movie called *Blood Brothers*. Richard Gere has the type of sex-appeal that could tear the country apart, and also signs of a talent that could slay all competition from the other American superstars. Richard Gere is hot in L.A. ■

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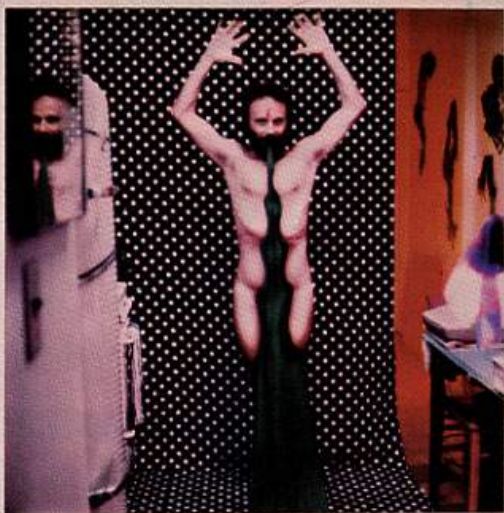
Lucas Samaras is not a baseball player. When his name is mentioned one knows he's heard it somewhere, but not precisely where. Lucas Samaras is an artist—a well-known one based at New York's respected Pace Gallery. Samaras has had thirty-two one-man shows in the last twenty years in cities from Columbus, Ohio, to Cologne, Germany. Right now he is preparing different shows for New York, London and Paris.

Hundreds of articles have appeared in print all over the world about Samaras and his work. He has garnered colorful descriptions such as "obsessive images," "piercing ideas," "eccentric propositions," "radical," "grotesque," and the provocative *New York Times* headline by Grace Glueck, "A Little Fetish Footage." The most apropos appeared in a 1966 review by John Gruen: "The Art of Cruelty."

Samaras' art is represented in the nation's important public collections and is included in an impressively long list of private collections. Actor Dustin Hoffman owns one of his early pastels. Lucas Samaras is an important American artist.

BY JIM FRAGALE

THIN G MAKER



"Autopolaroid" by Lucas Samaras (1976)



Polaroid film is manipulated in developing stages.

Lucas Samaras is best known for a series of bizarre, nude self-portraits taken with Polaroid's SX-70. These shocking photographs have caused gasps as slides and prompted viewers to stalk out of his autobiographical lecture. With his Autopolaroids, Samaras has created a series of unusually compelling, and surreal explorations of the body—his body, both whole and in parts—in various states of autoerotic intoxication. Samaras has obtained his effect by manipulating the Polaroid film in its developing stage to

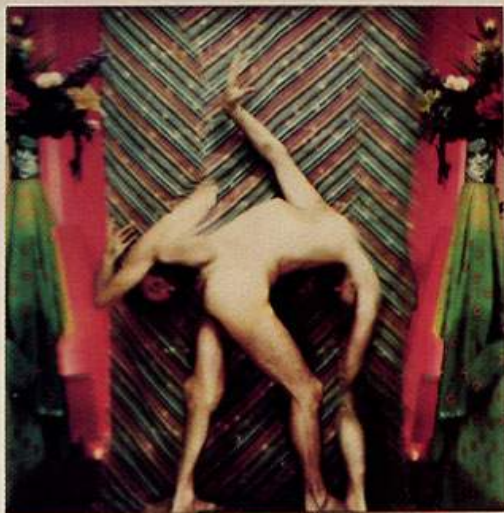
give his self-portraits a dreamlike, distorted crazy-mirror effect.

Samaras compiled these Autopolaroids in a fascinating prose-plus-visual called "Samaras Album" (published by the Whitney Museum of American Art and Pace Editions, Inc., New York.) which contains what he terms, "Autointerview," and "autobiography."

On the days we spoke, he was working with materials for a show of sewn fabrics to be exhibited at Pace Gallery early in 1978.

OUTRAGEOUS INVENTOR

Lucas Samaras is neither painter nor sculptor. Rather, he is a 'thing maker,' a term which he coined. Out of odd materials, he concocts objects and almost every "thing" (collage, assemblage, autopolaroid) he makes, suggests that everything in life is erotic—at least, life for Samaras. (Once he said: "If an artist does not have an erotic involvement with everything that he sees, he may as well give up.") To completely obtain his surreal effects he uses anything at hand: pins,



Various stages of autoerotic intoxication are explored.

jewels, wool, mirror, beads, sequins, springs, lenses, epoxy, feathers, nails, screws, nuts, flashlight bulbs, razorblades, flowers, broken glass, bullets, colored yarn, pebbles, candles, metals, woods.

Much of that work has an aggressive, malicious, dangerous, menacing, erotic overtone; a sado-masochistic penchant is ever-present. (A reviewer once wrote: "In few other artists' work is eroticism so pervasive or profound"). He is obsessed with scissors, knives, stiletto, screw, the dis-

**"If an artist
does not have an erotic
involvement
with everything that
he sees,
he may as well give up."**

embodied hand, the claw, the pin. Daggers are encrusted with pins, scissors encased with luminous stone; a knife-blade bears a partial reflection of a face; another scissor is made entirely of cotton; and still another dagger wound in multi-colored threads.

BACKGROUND

Lucas Samaras was born on September 14, 1936, in Kastoria, Macedonia, Greece. After a harrowing wartime childhood in Greece (he wrote: "Childhoods



He uses everything at hand: lenses, nails, flowers.

without wars must be dull affairs.”). he was brought to West New York, New Jersey, where he grew up as an “immigrant.” In 1955, he entered Rutgers University on a scholarship. There, he studied art and took part in some of the fashionable “happenings” that took place in the name of art in the early 1960s. Later, he took acting classes with Stella Adler, wrote erotic stories, and studied art history at Columbia, painting in oils and pastels.

Today, Lucas Samaras lives and works in isolation in a one-room studio apart-

**In his one-room
Manhattan apartment,
every
nook and
cranny is filled with some
small, or some
very large, art object.**

ment in a brownstone on Manhattan's West 71st Street. Every nook and cranny is filled with some small, or some very large, art object. (I am reminded of the question he asked himself in “Autointer-view” in “Samaras Album”: “Are you an object maker?” His answer: “I am a thing maker.”) The large room has parquet floors, and one wall is completely a bookcase, filled with books, small Samaras works and other objects. (Example: a framed color close-up of an erect cock nearly all the way inside a vagina.) There



"When another person comes in, my apartment dissolves."

is a compulsive orderliness to this chaotic room. In his apartment I felt like an intruder. I did not feel welcome.

(In "Samaras Album" he wrote: "... when another person comes in, sits down, uses that glass, makes this or that comment, moves that object, changes his facial expressions, my apartment dissolves. It loses its intricacy, its naturalness, its physical extension, its precision. The presence of my visitor infiltrates everywhere like an odor, like a conscience, like an exhibitionist ...").

THE INTERVIEW - Part One

I telephoned Lucas Samaras for an interview. It took half a dozen calls to finally set up a meeting including an inspection by the Pace Gallery. I was to meet him at his apartment on 71st Street, which is half-a-block from Central Park. I rang the bell, he met me at the front door and suggested a walk in the park which later he said was to "soothe the beast." He didn't know me and he wanted to check me out. "People used to shake hands to prove they didn't have knives in their

hands," he said. Walking in the park was his way of finding out that I didn't have a knife in my hand or up my sleeve, and to determine that I wasn't a student trying to do a term paper.

It was a mild, fall late October day and the park was filled with the sounds of children's laughter and jets flying overhead. We walked and talked. One of the first comments he made was about my "ravaged face," as he termed my countenance. It was only the first of many inter-

(Continued on page 38)



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for as noble a purpose as any involved in our prior decisions." Justice Douglas was talking about marriage, but there is no reason why his beautiful and moving words should not apply to any love relationship, gay or straight, with or without the formal bonds of matrimony.

Nor is the Constitutional right to privacy limited only to married couples. In the case of *Eisenstadt v. Baird* (1972), a law which allowed the distribution of contraceptives to married couples but not to singles was struck down by the Court: "If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether or not to bear or beget a child." (Emphasis in the original)

The famous Supreme Court decision which struck down laws which totally banned abortions, *Roe v. Wade* (1973), was also based on the right of privacy. The Court ruled the decision of a woman whether or not to terminate her pregnancy was within the protection of the right of privacy and could be interfered with by the government only when the government could show a "compelling state interest." Not only must the government have a compelling reason for interfering with the right of privacy, but the law which it enacts may infringe on privacy only as narrowly as possible to effect the legitimate purpose. For example, the government has a legitimate interest in the health and morals of its citizens. But that does not mean that the government would be allowed to regulate that health and those morals by placing a television camera in every room of every building in the nation. "Big Brother" will be kept at bay as long as the right of privacy is enforced by the Court!

Before we go into the limits on the right to privacy, let's take a look at the case of the husband and wife who were sent to jail for the crime of fellatio perpetrated in their own bedroom. The case is *Lovisi, v. Slayton* heard by a federal District Court in Virginia in 1973. Mr. and Mrs. Lovisi placed an ad in a swinger's magazine looking for a partner to set up a threesome. They met a Jamaican with the singularly appropriate name of Romeo Dunn. The three of them had sex in the Lovisi's home in the privacy of their bedroom, during which Mrs. Lovisi fellated both her husband and Dunn. Unfortunately for the Lovisis, their activities were recorded with a Polaroid camera, and the pictures were found and taken to school by Mrs. Lovisi's daughters from a former marriage. The police were informed of the existence of

the pictures by the school authorities, and the police executed a search of the Lovisis' home with a properly obtained search warrant. Dunn was later apprehended and apparently turned state's evidence in order to escape prosecution. He was eventually deported to Jamaica. Mr. and Mrs. Lovisi were separately tried and convicted of sodomous activities with each other.

After the conviction, Mr. Lovisi petitioned the federal court for a writ of habeas corpus, contending that the Virginia sodomy statute under which he was convicted was unconstitutional under the Supreme Court's rulings in the privacy cases discussed above. He argued that the right of privacy which he and his wife enjoyed put their private activities beyond the scope of the Virginia sodomy statute. District Judge Merhige agreed with this part of Mr. Lovisi's argument and held that sodomy, between married couples at least, was not punishable by the state when conducted with consent in private. However, Judge Merhige ruled that Mr. and Mrs. Lovisi had surrendered or waived their right to privacy by inviting Mr. Dunn to join them. According to Judge Merhige's reasoning, the right of privacy was either all or nothing. The couple must be totally secluded, for if they allowed any other person to enter their bedroom, they completely gave up the right to exclude anyone, including the state from coming in, too! Apparently, two is company, but three's a public event!

Mr. Lovisi appealed this decision to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Chief Judge Haynesworth (Nixon's would-be appointee to the Supreme Court) upheld Judge Merhige's decision on the grounds that the Lovisis had waived their right to privacy by their conduct. But this time, three judges dissented from the decision. They held, correctly I believe, that "privacy" does not mean the same thing as "secrecy." A matter may be private without being a secret. The majority opinion even conceded that if the Lovisis had committed sodomy and then published a magazine account of their activities, they could not be prosecuted. How then did they waive their right of privacy by inviting Mr. Dunn to join them? Since they were prosecuted, not for any sex that they had with Romeo, but for their activities with each other, Mr. Dunn's presence was completely irrelevant. Further, the Supreme Court had held in *Roe v. Wade* that a woman's decision whether or not to have an abortion remained private even though she must necessarily share it with her physician and the staff of the hospital to which she goes.

The reasoning of the majority opinion also fails in that it depends on the idea of the Lovisis having "waived" their rights. In legal terms a waiver means the giving up of a right, and a right may be waived by conduct as well as by words. However, the Courts and almost all legal writers have held that the waiver of a Constitutional right must be fully informed and voluntary. In other words, a person must be aware of the right he or she is giving up and must be able to understand the consequences. The familiar case of an arresting officer "reading his rights" to a person being arrested is an apt example. As the *Miranda* decision held, the right against involuntary self-incrimination and the right of the accused to the assistance of counsel do an arrestee little good if he or she is not aware of them. Can it be realistically or rationally held that the Lovisis voluntarily and knowingly waived their Constitutional right of privacy when they invited Romeo into the bedroom with them? I think not.

The United States Supreme Court refused to hear a further appeal, thus letting the decision of Chief Judge Haynesworth stand. While this case was coming up through the Courts, the more famous decision in *Doe v. Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Richmond* was handed down. That case, which was discussed in *Blueboy*, Volume VII (July/August 1976), dealt with an attempt to have the Virginia sodomy statute declared unconstitutional as applied to gays. The parties argued that the statute deprived them of due process, freedom of expression and privacy. They received, if possible, an even shodder treatment at the hands of the Court than did the Lovisis. The opinion of the District Court is a wonderland of errors of fact and distortions of the law. For a few brief examples, the Court states that the State of Virginia had a right to infringe on the right of privacy because the activity punished was a crime. Such reasoning would make any criminal law of any state constitutional — the state declares an activity to be a crime and then must be allowed to punish it. This reasoning would hold the abortion laws voided in *Roe v. Wade* as constitutional. If you will remember from *Roe v. Wade*, the accepted test for whether a state may interfere with a right of privacy requires the state to show a compelling interest and to devise its law so as to achieve that interest as narrowly as possible. The state in this case made no effort whatsoever to show that adult, consensual homosexual practices contribute in any way to moral delinquency, and the District Court held that they didn't even have to try! The state's justification for punishing homosexuality

was supplied by citations to *Leviticus*, despite the fundamental principle of separation of Church and State. Suffice it to say that the Judeo-Christian tradition, especially as misinterpreted by the District Court, is not the Constitution of the United States!

We had one dissenting judge in the *Doe* case — *mirabile dictu*, the same Judge Merhige who ruled against the *Lovis*! For some unknown but blessed reason, Judge Merhige was able to appreciate the arguments that he had earlier spurned. He held that: "In my view, in the absence of any legitimate interest or rational basis to support the statute's application, we must, without regard to our own proclivities and reluctance to judicially bar the state proscription of homosexuality, hold the statute as it applies to the plaintiffs to be violative of their rights under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States." Judge Merhige concluded that the state made "no tender of any evidence which even impliedly demonstrated that homosexuality causes society any significant harm. No effort was made by the defendants [the state] to establish either a rational basis or a compelling state interest so as to justify the proscription of [homosexuality]." Three cheers for Judge Merhige, and a hearty razzberry for the Supreme Court for refusing to hear the case on appeal!

What is the state of the case for privacy, then, after these decisions? Surprisingly, it's not as bad as you might expect. The decisions of the majorities are not only wrong, but irrational. They stick out like the proverbial sore thumbs from the other decisions dealing with the right of privacy and are obviously based more on homophobia than on upholding the Constitution. They will be attacked again and again in the Courts until they finally fall. The Courts are unresponsive now, but state legislatures who make the laws are not necessarily so obtuse. Here is where the aid of straights, who are also vulnerable to the sodomy laws, can be brought to play. And here's the argument that should be made to the legislatures.

The Supreme Court has given us an excellent definition of how the right of privacy is established and how far it goes. In the landmark decision of *Katz v. United States* (1967), Justice Harlan described the test of the right of privacy as follows: "First, that a person have exhibited an actual (subjective) expectation of privacy and, second, that the expectation be one that society is prepared to recognize as 'reasonable.'" Let's take this definition of the scope of privacy and apply it to the

case of the sodomy laws.

First, the people engaged in the sexual conduct must show that they consider their activities to be private. Thus, a couple, gay or otherwise, copulating on a public beach have shown that they do not expect to be private. But a couple who withdraws into the privacy of their own home, draws the curtains and shuts the doors, has plainly exhibited their subjective expectation that they will be left alone. Further, it makes no difference whether or not they have invited a friend along or twenty friends — by secluding themselves from the sight of the uninvited public, they are showing an expectation that the public

Even if Judaism and/or Christianity forbade sodomy (and I do not concede that either one does), it is forbidden to the government to establish the precepts of any religion.

and the state will keep their noses out of the bedroom.

That's fine as far as it goes, you may say. But what about the question of the state's recognition of that expectation as reasonable? The state will not respect an expectation of privacy when murder or rape is involved — why should it when sodomy is afoot? Here, we turn to the second part of the test described by Justice Harlan. What is a reasonable activity to be secured by privacy from the state's intervention? The answer is, "Any activity in which the state cannot show a compelling state interest." Once the veil of privacy has been drawn, the state must show a very important state purpose for piercing it. Such purpose cannot be supplied by assertions that "Homosexuality is wrong," or "Giving head is nasty," or "The Bible says not to do it." The simple declaration by the legislature that sodomy is a crime cannot be used to bootstrap the state's investigators into the privacy of the bedroom. The state must show a compelling state purpose such as protection from harm or danger which may result for others.

How could the state demonstrate such compelling interests? The state has a compelling interest in preventing the use

of force by one citizen against another. The state has a compelling purpose in protecting the morals of the young, the feeble-minded or insane. Thus, the state is completely within its rights in preventing rape whether or not it is homosexual or heterosexual, whether or not it is sodomous or in the missionary position. So also, the state is within its rights to protect children who are under the age of legal consent from engaging in any form of sexual activity whether or not they consent to it. Even adults, who because of some mental incapacity are not able to give informed consent, may also be protected from any form of sexual intercourse, gay or straight.

As Judge Merhige pointed out, and as many, many others have also done, the state is not able to show such an interest in cases of adult, consensual sexual conduct. Once we have eliminated the unwilling, the children, drunks, dummies, and madmen, what harm can result from sex between consenting adults in private? These activities cause no physical harm to the participants; they do not lead to moral delinquency; when conducted in private, they do not even offend the sight of the public. The only ground left for the state is that sodomy somehow harms the spiritual beings of those who engage in it, but, as the First Amendment of the Constitution succinctly states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion" — and that prohibition has been extended to the states by the Fourteenth Amendment. Even if Judaism and/or Christianity forbade sodomy (and I do not concede that either one does), it is forbidden to the government to establish the precepts of any religion.

A very good argument, if I must say so myself! All of the sodomy laws ought to be repealed immediately. Ah-ha! you may exclaim — the straights will use such an argument to get the laws repealed as to them and their bed-games, but the legislatures may still prohibit only gay sex as they have indeed done in some benighted states. How will any of this help gays?

The answer is that not the tiniest shred of legal justification can be adduced for differentiating between legalizing sodomy for straights and legalizing sodomy for gays. All of the arguments for criminalizing gay sex are equally applicable to criminalizing straight sodomy. What's sauce for the gays will do equally well for a straight cooked goose! All of the arguments against sodomy are basically moral ones, and even if we allowed the state to establish these moral strictures, no moral differentiation can be made between straight sodomy and the gay versions.

Legislators are not always so rational, however. Especially in election years, they are wont to do whatever the folks back home want, rational or irrational, constitutional or unconstitutional.

In this situation, another part of the United States Constitution comes to bear: The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The states are forbidden from treating their citizens unequally under the law. That does not mean that the states can't treat one group of people differently from another group of people. If that were true, then a graduated state income tax would be unconstitutional because it axes some classes of wealth differently from others. In order to treat classes of its citizens differently, the state must show that there is a reason for doing so.

When it comes to testing the constitutionality of that reason given by the state for treating different classes of people differently, two levels of examination by the Court will be used. If the classification rests on what is called a "suspect classification" such as race or national origin, then the state must show a compelling state interest in making such a distinction. If the class is not based on one of these few suspect classifications, then the state need only show a rational basis for the distinction.

It would be nice to say that sexual preference is one of those suspect classifications, but it isn't, and the Court seems to show no interest in making it one. All is not lost, however. The state would still need to show a rational basis for criminalizing gay sex but not straight sodomy. As we have argued before, no such legally valid basis can be shown. Therefore, the state would be forced either to jail the straights along with the gays or decriminalize both varieties of sodomy.

It won't be an easy task. The majority of judges are either frankly homophobic themselves or feel intimidated by the homophobic segment of our society. Legislators are neither better nor worse. But the case for privacy can be made and can win the day when the straight majority understands that its rights are inextricably tied up with the rights of gays. In a larger sense, all civil rights are interdependent — no one of them is safe as long as others are in jeopardy. But in this case, a strong and convincing argument can be made that the rights of gays and straights are quite literally one and the same. The straight majority must be educated to the fact that its members are in danger of ending up in the slammer with the Lovis and the gays as long as the sodomy laws are on the books.

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mittent comments on me, on my technique, on my tape recorder, credentials, etc., etc., etc. He did not allow the interview to relax for any more than a few minutes at a time without drawing attention to the fact that it was, indeed, an interview, and I might violate him in some way.

He asked for samples of my work "to establish the scale," he said. "It would show me from your presentation, from the evidence, what the victim said and whether you embellished it or not. I assured him that he was not a victim and that I was not out to do a hatchet job on him. He was not reassured.

"You are different from the art interviewer," he said. "They have a lot of questions about the work. It's boring answering those same questions over and over again."

Lucas Samaras is 41 years old, has brown eyes, salt and pepper hair and beard. He is slight and, to his dismay, losing his hair. He has a trace of an accent on which one has trouble putting his finger. You would not suspect he is Greek.

"You," he said to me, "look more like a Greek than I do." I changed the subject. We sat on a bench.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

"It's not necessary. Hobbies are out. I can't stay in the bathtub more than ten minutes. I get anxious. I relax very quickly and then I have to do something. I am active. Even when I'm talking to somebody I'm on the ball. I watch television. I use television as a filler. I watch movies on TV. The first year of 'Mary Hartman' was very good. The first half-year of 'Maude' was nice, but then ... 'Soap' was never any good. Sometimes the TV's just on from six until twelve or one a.m. or until I become aware of WOR Mystery Theatre on radio ... like the old days. I listen to that from seven to eight.

"I spend a lot of time alone. People shouldn't panic about being alone. I don't read anymore except newspapers and magazines - like *New York Magazine* and all the art magazines ... Let's walk, it's getting cold." We walked to the ice skating rink.

Samaras again asked what I might do with the material. How I might write it.

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? WHAT MIGHT YOU SAY THAT WOULD BE DAMAGING?

"Nothing financially," he answered. Then he recounted an example of a famous cartoonist a few years back being damaged by a newspaper report of his alleged child molesting.

"Lucas, you are not a child molester, are you?" I kidded. He did not laugh.

"To be considered homosexual might be damaging," he went on. "Not against homosexuality, but to be thought one.

Also, to be anti-semitic would be damaging. To be thought a Communist."

We stopped in a Greek coffee shop on a corner near his apartment. We ordered coffee. I joked that we should have given the order in Greek. He was not amused. "I usually don't want them to know I'm one. I don't want that contact." There was a long pause. He again expressed concern about the interview, citing a particular friend of his that was burned. Who had I interviewed, he asked.

"There is a difference between doing an actress and doing me," he cautioned. Then there was another pause.

"It bothers me that people will not allow all kinds of sexual activities to go on ... it's immaterial if one is this ... or that." I let the non sequitur be.

Samaras then expressed disappointment in the media. "It tends to give more attention to actors, actresses, to athletes and neglects artists. There is only one art show on television a year. That's ridiculous. If you think of all the people who go to museums and so on. It's incredible that art is on television once-a-year - period. And yet, if you think of how a culture is remembered, it's through its art.

"The individual, the human being who happens to make art should be given equal time on television along with actors, actresses and athletes." I sensed that he would delight in being interviewed on television with the same focus given a celebrated movie star or athlete.

He eyed the tape recorder, which was underneath a note pad. "Even Andy Warhol. There haven't been any programs about Andy Warhol on television. Ten years ago there was a series of programs about pop artists. Artists are not treated equally.

"There are some things that are very, very important. Surviving, food, clothing, etc., that's important, but there's also that which we consider the highest form of the use of the brain and the mind - which is art. That is extremely important.

"You don't want to see artists on 'Hollywood Squares.' It has something to do with many of them being non-verbal. And many of them can't connect with ordinary people. Some of them can't say, 'Hi, how are you? How's the weather?'"

He stopped, and looked again at the tape recorder and said: "It's like an adult placing a kid on the toilet and saying, 'O.K., now do it!'"

He clammed up.

We made a date for the following day at noon. He suggested that we stop by his apartment "for ten minutes" so that "the shock" would be over the next day when I arrived for the second interview.

THE INTERVIEW — Part Two (or the second day)

I arrived five minutes early as he was taking out a stack of newspapers. Once

we got inside his apartment, I got the tape recorder business out of the way. I showed it to him, and said I was going to turn it on - now. He consented with a nod of the head as if it had never bothered him the day before. He ground coffee beans — to make fresh coffee — which he removed from the freezer and then mixed with something else in a jar. He made ice tea for himself. He had no milk. The coffee was horrendous. It tasted like espresso laced with Ex-Lax. I took three sips, period. My chair was one he's made from bits of loose, multi-colored yarn. Above my chair was a six-foot-high photographer's light. I did not draw attention to the light. Playing on the radio was a station with a format of 1920s, 30s, and 40s songs.

"I like songs from the past. I don't like today's music. I've never been in a disco. I think they are delusions of ideas from my group from the 1960s."

Bolts of material were stacked on the table. A brand new sewing machine was set up on the kitchen table.

The night before I had read his book "Samaras Album." I was particularly moved by the "Autobiography" section.

"Most people have problems with that part of the book," he said. "Most people don't realize they have to be artists, writers, and they have to be critics. It's that critic in them, that they neglect. One has to be a vicious critic of his own work."

"Part of the problem for some people with 'Autobiography' has to do with being an American. Being an American doesn't really lead to a lot of conversation about what you think and what you do and so on. A lot of it is hiding; a lot of it is style; it's surface — trying to get by with the rest of the crowd. If you're a foreigner, you have this tension; you are different automatically and you sort of confront that. Now you can either fall with the punches and pretend, act and do the gestures, and then after a while — ten, fifteen years — you pretty much become that other 'nationale,' but I rejected that. If somebody said, 'Hey, you're a foreigner,' I accentuated it somehow."

"I noticed in some other autobiographies, they didn't put enough privacies in them, which meant that there's this area they didn't want to deal with."

"Today, now, everybody goes on television and tells their private little things. Everybody has private little things: great things, tragedies or happy times. But the difference, one has to find ways of making those events more than they are and most people don't have those tools and they end up being boring. There are two things involved in writing an autobiography! One is craft and the other is self-discovery and they have to be together — if not, it's boring."

"There is a difference between the con-

versation with another person and the conversation going on in your head. Another person is another person — period. But when you are thinking about them in your head, you have the ability to change them, manipulate them.

"But, no matter what — you always have people. Often it is in your head, memories of them. You can't get away from that fact. The objectionable thing about real people — they have desires that are different than yours so there's conflict: What you want, what *they* want."

He expressed his distaste for intimacy. He changed the subject.

"Women are discovering now that they need a little room to be by themselves for a period of time every day or for a certain period every week. It doesn't mean they don't love their children or their husband, it just means you have to have privacy; they have to be able to be alone. I am able to be alone, but for most people it is a big problem."

Out of nowhere, again, he began talking about the conflict between interviewer and subject and expressed concern about the direction of the material.

He said: "I am goal oriented. I always make up stories about people — what they're going to do and because I push myself in all aspects — to get better to do better — I want the same thing from people. If I'm going to meet a person, I want that meeting to produce something terrific. If it doesn't — if there's no anticipation of something terrific then I might as well not have it take place. Now, if I considered you an ordinary person, you might as well be in the street. I'd notice you and pass on. But you persisted in having this interview and got it and it's not a casual, relaxed thing, as you suggest. There is work to be done."

Another discussion ensued about my technique as a reporter, my tape recorder and how I presented myself. I wasn't quite sure whether he was criticizing me, complimenting me, or merely keeping me on my toes.

"We didn't have much — property, wealth, whatever, knowledge or long pants — I just had to think of my *self*. My *self*, my equipment, my past, was it. That was the important thing."

"I don't know if it's an artistic mechanism, but a lot of us like to have a deep connection with people and when we are involved with people we get glimpses of emptiness where we're not really getting a response and we ask, 'Who needs it? Who needs this half-ass response,' and then we go back to art. *Art never rejects us*. It's there forever. We can do whatever we want with it always, every day. *Art allows* that egotistical part of us. With another person, you can't. You have to be concerned with *them*. Whatever I wrote in the book, whatever dissatisfactions I may



Interior of Samaras' bedroom.

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shouldn't panic about
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alone, but for most people
it is a big problem."



"Room # 2" (1966)

have had, with people or conditions, all that became positive, because it was turned into work.

"Now, if my work was taken away from me, or it was pointed out constantly that I was not good, I would probably have nothing. And then I'd be nothing."

"I like distance. I like to like people, but at a distance. I can't understand how people can be married for 30 years. I also can't understand people going out and picking up partners every night. I can't understand both of those conditions. I don't handle any of that. I do nothing."

"What I want to do is usually not what other people are doing. When you go to the different department stores, Bloomingdale's, Macy's — everybody shopping there is dressed as if they came out of the racks of those stores they're shopping in. I want to avoid that for myself. I like to be anonymous. As I'm getting older I want my work to speak to other people, not me."

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF BEAUTY?

"Beauty has to do with your upbringing. You respond to the people that your eyes saw as a child. Some people sort of manipulate those childhood images by the mass media. They read *Playboy* and they become conditioned into that heavy, plastic, pink-ied kind of flesh; silicone, magazine flesh. The colors are all pink and peach. Or, *Vogue* might present a hollowed, porcelain look. So your original responses can change a little bit."

"I find that I'm less interested in beauty anymore. I've talked to enough beauties and they're kind of empty. In the last ten years, I'm more interested in minds instead of beauty, when it comes to people. Now I tend to shutter away from particularly beautiful people because I know there's not going to be anything to talk about. To take those people and just fuck them — I wouldn't want to dirty my body. However, boys and girls of say, about twelve, have this wonderful, naive delicateness even if they are kind of stupid — it's wonderful. At least, they have potential."

"If I was interested in sex, I could see myself getting pleasure out of any age. It could be a baby, or a 70-year-old person. It could be anybody."

"Conventional beauty doesn't interest me ... it's those oddities that we have ... differences ... that are the most wonderful features of a character ..."

HOW DOES THIS DEFINITION APPLY TO YOUR WORK?

"A lot of it has to do with the styles of the times. I was fortunate because I decided I wanted to expose a certain part of myself and society decides to expose that part of

themselves at the same time. Then one becomes a leader, a trendsetter. Other times you can do something and society is not in that mood. It might be going in another direction and then your work can be disregarded."

ARE YOU PLANNING ANOTHER BOOK?

"My sewing is the only thing I'm concerned about now."

HOW LONG DID IT TAKE YOU TO LEARN TO SEW?

"One day. I did sew some as a child. My father was a furrier. And even in the summers I used to go and sew furs. So sewing is connected to my family. That's not important. What is important is the use of sewing to unveil another part of one's artistic mind."

IS IT O.K. IF PEOPLE ARE ACTUALLY TURNED-ON BY THE POLAROID?

"That's o.k. In some people's eyes that can be pornography and in some people's eyes pornography is wonderful. In some people's eyes a nude picture of Christ is pornographic. In other people's eyes, it's beautiful."

Samaras interrupted us again with more discussion of the interview:

"In interviews it isn't the kind of questions asked. Many times it's what happens to whatever I said. And many times I pick up the paper and think 'What a stupid thing I said.' Many times an interviewer, like a gallery, for instance, will take what you said, chisel it a little bit, eliminate some of the kinks because they like you, and what comes out is golden, magnificent prose. Other times, they leave everything there and it's a piece of garbage."

TELL ME ABOUT THE LECTURES YOU GIVE

"I give a lecture around the world. I talk about myself. I use slides of my work. And then, at the end, they can ask me questions: one hour, with an hour for questions. I just came back from a world tour. Eight places for the United States Government Information Service. People respond to the slides and to my nastiness in answering the questions. I don't know if they like it, but they remember it. I gave the lecture in Rome, Greece, Iran, Japan."

"I simply show slides of various periods of my work. I try to connect them together. It boils down to an autobiography or a self-portrait. My purpose is to get them looking so they can go to their various studios or homes and feel that they can employ any material to make art. They don't have to have oil. They don't have to have one set of rules. From one side I have to give them that incentive to do anything and from the other they have to know their history — the history of art — if they don't, forget it! You have to know the his-

tory, the language. The language is the past. You cannot create unless you know the language of the culture. So the purpose of my lecture is to teach, to instruct."

"Also, it's important for them to see what I look like. It's one thing for students/people to see an artist's work in a book, but it's another to look and see you're a real person."

HOW DO THEY RESPOND TO THE POLAROID?

"In some places they gasp, other places they walk out. Others, they like it. Once at the Detroit Museum — they gave a dinner beforehand. There were fifty people there. Some of the ladies came to the table and said 'Mr. Samaras, you're so wonderful.' Then afterward, they came to the auditorium and as soon as I started showing the slides, they started walking out. Those jerks didn't know my work, but they were willing to do all that phony stuff. There were a lot of students there who loved my irreverence, fortunately. Just as I put you through sparks yesterday, I do the same thing to museum people. I may find some chink in a museum — they may have some awful Renaissance paintings — so I let them have it."

"I liked that evening. At the end of it, as I was walking out, one woman slammed a door in my face. There was this kind of unreserved hatred they had, for the audacity I had, for showing nude photographs. (He giggled). I liked it."

"It is my function to tell them something about art. Just as it's o.k. for medical people to have access to the human body, to tell you something about the body, in all of its nudity, equally, it's important for the artist to have access to the human body. In my case I'm interested in autobiography so I use my own body; other people use other people's bodies, but, they don't have to be afraid about the body and all of its functions in a sense. So my thing is education. Of course, they scream and holler, whatever, but my job is to perk them up."

WHY DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE TO TAKE POT SHOTS AT ME, OR OTHER PEOPLE?

"It's automatic. I don't plan it. I just feel I have to do it. I'm like a fighter, you know, I'm punch drunk. I do the opposite of somebody saying, 'Oh, how nice you look. Oh, how wonderful!' I do the opposite. I say 'Oh, how lousy you look.' So, sometimes people like it. They see it is not hostility. It is something else. The others, who don't see what it is, they scream and holler."

"But those Polaroids, it was a challenge to do the photographs of myself and now that battle is won, one has to go on and do something else."

DO YOU HAVE ANY INTEREST IN GOING INTO ANY OTHER MEDIUM?

"I don't want to answer any questions about the future. I don't want to consider the future with you or with anybody. I want to think about it, but I don't want to talk about the future."

THE FUTURE ITSELF DOESN'T BOTHER YOU, THEN, JUST TALKING ABOUT IT?

"Yeah, I don't want anybody to influence it in any way. I just want it to be there and when I deal with it, I deal with it. There are people who like to tell you 'I'm going to do this and that.' I'd like to tell you about it after I've done it. Part of it is superstition. Part of it has to do with manners. After I've done it, I'm able to think about it; able to judge it; able to give you what part I want. If I were to tell you off-the-cuff what I'm planning, I may later regret it."

"Control is very important to me. Lack of control means headaches. It means I have to pay for it. I never liked the aspect of going out with the boys and getting drunk and losing inhibitions. I never liked that. Or even taking drugs. That to me is ... I wouldn't do it. It's not required. I don't require it. If I want to have fantasies, I have fantasies. If I want to see it weird, I see it weird. I don't have to be under somebody else's ... some thing's control. I want to be the controller. I get pleasure out of doing whatever I have to do out of my own resources."

"I am strong willed. By my own will, I can turn a piece of lead into a piece of gold. I can turn an apple into caviar. I don't have to have the real caviar. I don't have to have the drug. By my own will I can do it."

WHY DIDN'T YOU LIKE DRINK WITH THE BOYS.

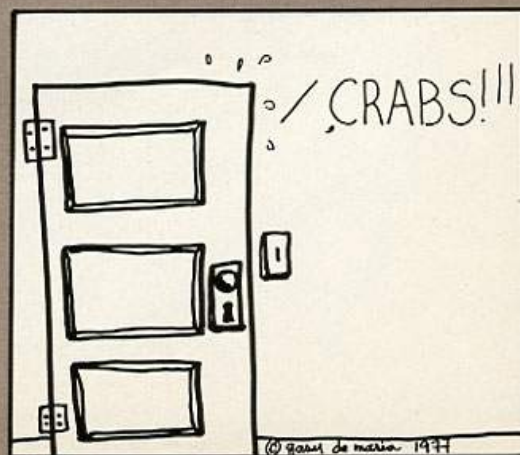
"I think I hated it, in the early days, that getting drunk was the only way men could express affection for each other. I detested it. If they have to express affection let them express affection. Why do you have to get drunk, why do you have to have that too? That fake release? It's the same thing, going to a party. Somebody shoves a cocktail at you so you can relax. Why can't one relax without the cocktail?"

"I think it's connected to another thing. As a child I used to be taken by my mother to other ladies' homes, and they would always offer you something — cookies or whatever — in Greek houses, if you didn't want it, you had to say no three or four times. The first time they don't accept the 'no.' It's just a formal no. I learned that kind of thing. If you offer me something, I reject it. At first, I say no, I don't want it. I don't want to deprive you of it. I still like saying no."

Amen.

THE CLOSET

BY GARY DE MARIA



WET SECTION

hot men
into sweaty action
and at-home
poseidon adventures.
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swims o.k.,
lube dudes and
sauna studs welcome.
let's hear it for
aquatics!

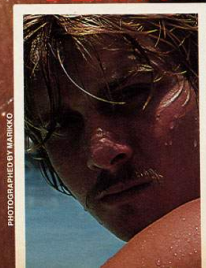
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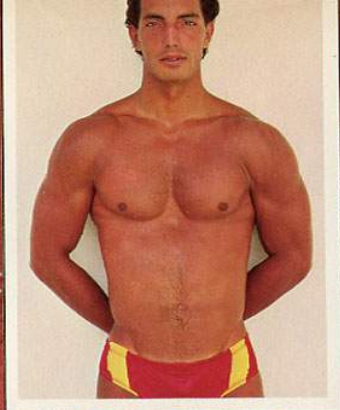
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ROCKY









V A I N ATTEMPTS

ILLUSTRATED BY DONALD LEAKE

Spike Lamont the child star who won the world's heart in the now-classic 1955 Cannes Film Festival contender, Chicken Shit (a sort of scatological Our Gang) — is all grown up now and has something to say.

On March the 13th, Spike celebrated his 30th birthday. I was fortunate enough to be granted an exclusive interview shortly after this momentous day ... and live to tell about it.

Uncertain rays of sun slowly pierced the vertical blinds of Spike Lamont's living room. A tense brand of melancholy hovered over the scene. Spike, six feet tall, lithe, sensitive, boyish yet mature, listened to my questions with a far-away look. I was wondering what gave his face such an indefinably sensual cast (face bronzer? ... silicone cheeks? ... Ultra Lash?). A less-experienced interviewer might have forgotten that he was on the job.

Suddenly, Spike sprang into his bright, Art Deco bathroom, gazed into the huge Carlo Bugatti mirror and shouted, "I want life now! On my terms!" The unexpected violence that broke through his handsome frame dispelled the reverie I had lapsed into. Intrigued by Spike's mysterious changeability, I let myself become entranced by the magic of his deep, controlled voice (elocution lessons?). Before I could pose another question, however,

BY W. THOMAS PICKUREL

Spike was already answering my inflamed curiosity.

"I don't see myself as ever being particularly attached to anyone; anyone but myself, that is."

Spike's (L'Oreal Winter Wheat?) hair glistened around his intense, somehow youthful features. His attractiveness emanated from a commanding personal power, coupled with an almost physical presence, that left the impression of an obsessive drive to conquer. The world, as he had experienced it, was filled with deceptive surfaces.

"What I've always wanted more than anything else," he said, staring deeply into the beveled mirror, "is to be beautiful. Not that overdone 'inner beauty' we've all heard so much about and grown to abhor, what I'm really after is that special sort of pure, deceitful, Hollywood surface adornment. A perfect face and body. Absolutely superheral."

Spike twisted his European Health Spa form away, and moodily scrutinized the shelves of expensive toiletries. Absentmindedly fondling a tube of Alexandra de Markov Formula Mask, he burrowed back into the seductive tunnel of his own consciousness. I was reminded for an instant of an angry Rimbaud, pissing in defiance from the Arch de Triomphe.

But Spike is not all romantic fantasy. His life also consists of hardened reality, blinding forces that assault him each waking day. What can

"Usually, just recounting my credit cards is a sure-fire remedy for depression. And if that doesn't work, I mix myself a very dry martini, drink it right out of the container, put the blender on frappe and sit on it."

torment a man who could seemingly spin the world on his finger like a basketball? Like the minotaur of Greek myth, he appears lost in the labyrinth of self. Will he ever seek a being of equal "depth" to assuage the intrinsic loneliness of a human life?

"Oh, yes," he insists coyly, "I do see love in the future, but not *my* future. I know it's all my fault, but I've never really understood it. It seems so nebulous, cloud-like to me — as remote as Indonesia, or Spokane, with its poor starving kids, or Saturn for that matter. Listen, I've got a Pisces sun, Pisces moon and, brace yourself, *Gemini* rising, and we all know what *that* means, don't we? Besides, my cock is too small."

And yet, he humbly concedes, "I would like to someday become irrevocably attached to either Hugh Hefner or the Shah of Iran. I think they're both awfully funny."

He laughs, and his guffaw is a brave shield against a world that showers him with poison praise. His outlook on life is stoic. "Depression," he bellows, "I can't let it bother me. It's a lot like constipation; you just get all shitted-up until you *have* to do something about it. Usually, just recounting my credit cards is a sure-fire remedy. And if that doesn't work, I mix myself a very dry martini, drink it right out of the container, put the blender on frappe, and sit on it."

Spike Lamont was loosening up. He mixed us both a martini and gave the blender a loving little pat. A few sips later, I was able to summon the

courage to venture a few questions about Spike's childhood. Expecting his stormy reluctance to expose such intimate facts, I phrased my question subtly.

"Spike, were you ever really a child?"

"Let me put it this way. I was one of those magnificent examples of Colgate-Palmolive childhood that got shipped off to camp every summer. The high Sierras. I was always getting beaten up and bitten, and I loved my counselor terribly. I can remember my last summer with him like it was yesterday. One sultry afternoon he took me on a nature walk. Not being able to avert my eyes from his tight khaki shorts and tough brown thighs, I stumbled and fell down several times. After we had hiked a good distance from camp, he shouted suddenly, and told me that a rattlesnake had jumped into his pants, and would I help him catch it. Dutiful little camper that I was, I leapt to the cause. I swear that I believed him when he told me that if you could stuff a snake's head in your mouth and suck out the venom in a hurry, it would fall asleep."

Not having realized the passage of time, I now noticed the reddening sun casting huge bronze rays towards the earth, bleeding onto a brilliant sea. The splendor which nature had provided seemed a fitting backdrop to the drama that was taking place. Spike rose from the couch, gazed again into a mirror, said something under his breath, and began tweezing his beautifully arched brows.

I was here to interview Spike Lamont for a magazine... but he was becoming disturbingly larger that life. Was I to cast off my professional detachment only to be swallowed alive by the dark orifice of a man's soul? I had always envisioned myself as a strong-willed journalist who could separate profession from desire. I gathered together a semblance of composure. In a cool tone that was absurdly incongruous with the hard bulge in my Bill Blass gabardine trousers I asked: "What are you thinking about right now, Spike?"

He turned from the mirror abruptly, and sprang at me.

"God-damn split-ends! That's what I'm thinking about! Look at me! Nothing's right! What you're seeing is costing me a beautifully manicured arm and leg just so I can stand living with myself. Do you know that Vitamin L is twelve bucks an ounce? I'm a slave to Anita of Denmark! I'm a lousy thirty years old, and my life is over! That's what I'm thinking about!"

Spike's all-too-sincere retort betrayed a serious refusal to accept the conventionally charted path in life.

"Modern psychology would suggest that you change your script.

Spike; strip away the flab and get to the meat. The real you."

"There is no real me, you asshole! Just a mask being carried around by this well formed apparatus called a body, and that's starting to go too. Besides, the real me wouldn't have any friends."

"But Spike, modern psychology would say that you don't need friends like that."

Tossed on the turbulent peaks of self-perception, Spike stopped suddenly, and looked back into the mirror for several minutes. Finally, in dream-like absorption, he said:

"Maybe you're right; I can't take this lying down."

"Terrific, Spike! I knew you'd be realistic. What do you intend to do?"

"Kill myself."

"You're not!"

"Of course not. But not because I don't think I should; because I don't have the balls."

**My friend
and I were inseparable
for six months,
and neither of us ever saw
the other looking
like anything but an eight-
by-ten glossy.**

Night crept into the room like a thief. We decided to take a walk on the beach where I could complete my interview before I would have to catch my plane back to Miami.

Now it was I who had to keep up with the surging pace of Spike's self-revelation:

"What does the future hold for me? Friends who don't really like me? Lovers who don't really love me? Cocaine to get it up? Alcohol to forget it? Valium to sleep it off?"

"What are you going to do about it, Spike?"

Even now, Spike Lamont's haunting last words are still ringing in my ears: "I'm getting a face-lift."

Vanity: It's what Carlyle called "the sixth insatiable sense," and Browning "the paradise of fools."

This ostensibly necessary evil lurking in the hearts of most gay men, has been known to develop into such self-absorption that real sexual pleasure, even "complete" gratification can ensue from the activity. Taken to this degree, the old god monster Narcissus will surely delight in his innocent preoccupation and curl up to his bronze chest.

I confess that I have no clear idea of how to solve the problem of vanity. In fact, there's a good possibility that there is no problem, and that I am the only dark sheep among us who experiences discomfort, and even pain, when I am forced by circumstance into the socio-sexual arena knowing that I don't look my best.

I would give up everything for love, but the last thing I'll give up is my curling iron.

During the summer of 1972, I landed my first real, heavy-on, live-in lover. My love is never blind, but this man was meltingly gorgeous. Half Swedish and half Arab; a blond stallion, tall as a tree, I myself sport a Norwegian-Cherokee heritage, and I've always felt that the face that God gave me to work with was His compensation for not hanging me hugely.

But each of us was so tied up about his appearance, and had such a firm understanding of the other's sensitivity thereto, that every morning whoever woke up first would edge quietly into the bathroom, rid himself of all traces of nocturnal pollution, return to bed sweet-smelling and smoothly tressed, and pretend to be sleeping when the other awakened and repeated the process.

My friend and I were inseparable for six months, and neither of us ever saw the other looking like anything but an eight-by-ten glossy.

There was nothing "sissy" about either of us. We lived in a California coastal community where "lunk" was the watchword, and flannel shirts and beat to hell Levi's were always the uniform of the day. I could retire today if I had a nickel for every time I repeated "I ain't no pussy, I ain't no pussy," as I spent two hours in the bathroom trying to make myself look like I just got up.

A grievous confession.

I really can't believe that mine is a solitary dilemma. Nor can I refuse to accept the responsibility for making others in our little society feel inadequate when they don't have the time, energy, or money to match my image.

Nor does this creature vanity restrict itself to physical appearance. It stretches its nasty tentacles into our average little childhoods and insists that we mislead everyone into believing that our fathers are all wealthy industrialists and our mothers famous ex-models, and that the issue of such a conjunction can only be what our Uncle Sigmund called "the possessor of all perfections. A star so bright and so beautiful that total strangers, with nay but a glance at us, will fast become devoted, life-long admirers and wait at our funerals, bemoan our departure with salty tears, legendize us in song and story, and forever speak of our beauty — unpoked at by the bony finger of time.

They need never know that shortly after

(Continued on page 97)

GUILT

"If you don't accept the fact that all of us are to some degree dealing with guilt feelings that arise from our sexuality, this won't make much sense."

BY BRUCE WERNER

The editor of a very slick Eastern magazine, whom I admire a good deal both for what he's done for me this past year and for his insight — and in spite of his rotten puns — recently wrote me: "Why, I ask you, are so many gay men turned on by degradation?"

What occasioned the question was a short story I had sent to one of his magazines. It's told by the "hero," who is lying in a urinal as he tells it. There's plenty of piss and cum, even a little vomit — enough to satisfy the most depraved. *Reader's Digest* stuff it ain't. That particular magazine concentrates on "heavy stuff" and is aimed at gay men. But lest you get the impression that only the far-out gays are into dirty sex, better take a look at the corner newsstand and see what's selling these days.

Playboy has an advice column filled with questions and answers on everything from bondage to bisexuality. *Penthouse*, whose viewpoint was

once English but now has become American as apple pie, is famous for its preoccupation with all things anal, from buttock shots to enemas.

And don't overlook that wunderkind of adult magazines, *Hustler*. You want raunchy? They've got it, in spades. Recently, their cover story was titled "Watersports — The New National Pastime." It was pretty much a how-to on the subject, how to get somebody into it for the first time, the correct positions for the male if he was dominant, for the female if she was, what places should and should not be wetted, and so forth. The basics.

Those are the more well-known mags. Take a look at the ones in the back on the top shelf, with names like "Stud," "Cherry," and "Macho." They get worse as you thumb through the rack. Well, maybe the straights are getting into all that kind of thing on a larger scale. I say "larger" only because they've always had their share of "deviates" too. Now, perhaps, the

rest are discovering what the boys in the back room have known all along.

Dirty, degrading sex may well be the up and coming style of the late '70's. But just what is "degrading sex?" When does plain old ordinary sex become dirty sex? Given the various views people have on sex today, that's a red-hot question. To more than a few of our conservative countrymen, I'm sure they think of homosexual sex in any of its delightful variations as degrading. Period.

That's one opinion, and I suppose they're entitled to it. Naturally, I draw the line a little bit beyond them. When I say "degrading sex," I'm talking about those acts that deviate widely from our "normal sex." That is to say, those sexual acts that involve more than basic fucking, sucking and necking. I'm talking about two things essentially: What one does and how one views oneself during the act.

The physical involves things like leather, bondage, pain, bodily waste products, and the use of "toys." The second consideration is the more important: How one views what one is doing. Whether one honestly believes what he is doing is dirty and degrading, or if it's just a "head trip" in which one partner assumes an overtly dominant or "clean" role and the other takes on passive or "degrading" characteristics, sex truly becomes dirty sex only when the person or persons involved view it that way.

Whether we're involved in it personally or not, many of us, both gay and straight, are fascinated with degradation and its sexual applications. In San Francisco, New York, London, Amsterdam and most other large, western cities, there has long been an interest in leather, S&M, bondage, watersports and all the rest. "Scat" is currently the big thing. You're not really into it if you don't dig scat. That, by the way, is the polite term for shit. But up until very recently, these activities were pretty much confined to those bit cities. Now it seems like there is at least a semi-leather bar in towns like Columbus, Albany, and Santa Cruz. Across the land, the brothers and sisters are sprouting out in leather jackets and the military look things traditionally coupled with far-out sex.

I recently attended an orientation meeting given by a group that is dedicated to S&M in all its variations. I expected a lot of gay men in leather and levis, acting macho and trying to make out. Instead, I found two very nice young couples from the suburbs, married and straight, who had gotten into this kind of sex and were looking to understand what the hell was going on in their own heads. There was a chubby secretary who had been unable to have an orgasm until a man she picked up in a singles bar tied her up and then fucked her as she lay helpless. There were several lesbians, none of whom

looked like truck drivers, five or six gay guys I knew from the leather bars in town, and an old man who said he had always been straight and, since the death of his wife a year ago, had fantasized on sadomasochism with a prostitute. He wanted to find out if he was weird or not. At the end of the meeting he said he was glad he had come, if only because it felt so good, finally finding out he wasn't alone - or sick. Sound familiar?

The point though, is that I had some preconceived notions about what kind of people would be involved with this flake organization of weirdos - and found just plain people instead. It is neither a gay organization, nor a particularly bizarre group of people. Except for their common interest in S&M, they could have been the PTA or Common Cause.

What's going on? Is it all another phase of the sexual revolution? Certainly, people are exploring their bodies more these days, and talking about it. But why the big surge of interest in dirty sex? We've been interested in sex for years; today,

When does plain old ordinary sex become dirty sex? Given the various views people have on sex today, that's a red-hot question.

perhaps, we're going one step further. As sex is seen more and more as merely another bodily function, thereby lowering its mystical appeal a notch or two, perhaps we're also beginning to look at the other bodily functions in a different light and raising them a notch or two in their fascination and appeal.

Whatever the reason, we are fascinated with those bodily functions — things like urination, defecation, sweating, even blowing the nose and spitting. We've been raised to believe that they are very, very nasty things. And the bad things in life, whether we ever actually become involved with them on a personal basis, do hold an intrigue for most of us.

Those bodily functions have a couple of interesting things in common. For one, they all involve something coming from the body, as opposed to something going into it. Eating isn't nasty. Getting a shot from the doctor may be unpleasant, but not something you can't talk about in public. Taking a drink is downright fun. And boys fucking girls like good little missionaries is supposed to be terrific - for the boys. As I said, all those things involve something going into the body. It's when stuff starts coming out again that the trip

gets a little rough for most of us.

Besides, all those things that come out are not good for you, are waste products, poisons. Because they are poisons, they take on a certain fascination.

This fascination, combined with fear that the human animal has for things it perceives as bad or evil, is common. Snakes scare the daylight out of most of us, yet we never miss a visit to the reptile house when we go to the zoo. In the same way, dirty, perverted sex holds an enthrallment for us. What's one of the top rock and roll groups in the world today? "Kiss," whose trademark is leather, far-out behavior, and decidedly kinky sex appeal. "Punk," in all its manifestations from blue and red hair to safety pins piercing the body, is another example of western society's disguised love affair with the deviant. Of course, glorification of war and all that goes with it is probably the best example of them all.

Publicly, we ignore bodily functions to the greatest possible extent, tolerating them only momentarily and then forgetting them. Many men have trouble using a public urinal where they're shoulder to shoulder and cock to cock with total strangers, and yet the purling sound of another's piss hitting the water can help get their own bladders to release. The etiquette of blowing the nose in public is pretty lengthy, too. You have to do it quietly. Never mind that big gob that didn't come out after that polite little puff. Better to suffer with it where it is than let out a real honk that will embarrass you and everyone else around. And after you have at least partially emptied your nostrils, don't look! That's really vile. Just politely fold it up and go on about your business, while we all pretend just as politely that you weren't blasting the snot out.

Sweating. Well, that particular bodily function has probably made more millionaires than crude oil. Whole cosmetic empires have been built up around names like "Ban," "Sure," and "Arid." This one, though, has achieved a kind of romance that the rest haven't. After all, there are a hell of a lot of men and women out there who count a nice armpit stench as a turn-on. Remember Humphrey Bogart in *The African Queen*? Or Errol Flynn as Captain Blood? They couldn't have been total daisies, but they surely were masculine, and very sexy. In *Hud*, one of the women panting after Paul Newman even goes so far as to admit that his body odor turns her on.

Most of us like the animal in a man. It's part of his excitement, his appeal. A "real" man sweats and stinks and spits in the gutter and gets drunk and pisses in the alley, or some combination thereof. It's part of the whole macho trip we've been raised with. And most of us emulate that trip to some extent. Being gross is part of being

butch. Even today, with our changing attitudes on just what it is that makes a man sexy and what doesn't, we still prefer our heroes to be "he-men" who aren't overly sensitive or polite - or well-mannered or sweet-smelling.

I'm not doing some kind of turn around here, trying to say that all those things are great and good and desirable. It wouldn't be too cool if we all nonchalantly threw up in the waste basket beside our desk at work and left it there. I still don't like to watch somebody pick their nose. And while b.o. can be hot in a man in a bar or a bed, it can also be downright offensive on a bus at eight in the morning. Yet the fact does remain, for some people, in certain situations, those things are a strong sexual turn-on. And for an even larger number of people, they have a mental attraction.

We love sex. Whether we're Puritans or the most depraved sexual animal in New York or San Francisco, we do love it. We may or may not talk about it, may or may not even want to think about it, but sex still makes the world go around. It's on our minds most of the time to some degree. Whether it's a nice pair of jeans walking by, or standing in the john taking a leak. It's quite simply with most of us most of the time. Whether the drive controls our lives or not, it's still a very strong drive. And somewhere along the line, a growing number of us have come to connect sex with those other functions of the body that aren't quite so nice.

For a homosexual, the entire idea of connecting sex with the bodily functions is double reinforced because our particular brand of sex necessitates becoming intimately involved with that area of the body from which they emanate. If you're into oral sex, you're going to put your face right down there in it. If, on the other hand, your bag is anal sex, it's just as bad. You're going to rub your finger around his you-know-what to get it lubricated, and then shove your pride and joy right up there, into his poop shoot, which is full of - well, you get the picture.

For many gays, the concept of sex is all pretty much rolled up into the same bundle with urination and defecation. Right from the beginning, we've had our noses in it, so to speak. Is it any wonder, then, that some of us have found that those bodily functions I've been talking about can be "fun" too?

I discovered water sports fairly young, when one of my little friends just couldn't hold it any more while I was doing him. (Precocious little devil, I was.) He got all embarrassed and I loved it. From then on, it was a while before I found out that there was a whole school in New York that was into it, who loved it and made a point of getting it. I remember my first urinal to this day, with love and respect.

Having explored the trail a bit myself, I asked a few other people about this whole area of sex. What was it about this kind of thing that turned them on? None of them could explain it. Most said it just turned them on. One answered that it was like S&M, only easier and safer. Another said that all gay sex involved some kind of degradation. That surprised me, and I asked him to explain.

It went this way: When you go to bed with a person of the same sex, you take a giant step in total contradiction of everything you've been brought up to believe in. It flies in the face of every tacit truth that has been drilled into our heads from day one. To begin with, the entire concept of masculinity in the traditional sense comes into play. I man has to "make it" with a girl, with her on the bottom and him on top, drilling away, making her completely subservient to his will. She is "fulfilled." He "has his way" with her.

If that man, instead, gets it on with another man, then both of them cannot "have their way." One is going to "lose."

There is often an underlying sense of guilt about what we are doing as gays... so deeply entrenched that most of us aren't even aware of it.

Even if one just goes down on the other, the one who simply stands or lays there may well question his masculinity. And if that guy responds in any way at all, he becomes an active participant, and "less than a man." Of course, all this is a gross oversimplification. Nor do I believe it anymore. But that early conditioning my parents laid on me (and there really isn't a better word to describe it) remains, mouldering away in the back of my psyche. Most of us carry it around with us throughout our lives.

There is often an underlying sense of guilt about what we are doing as gays. Whether we realize it or not, in the still of the night we may sometimes feel our mental stomachs take a turn. No matter how liberated we are, how free-thinking our upbringings may have been, there is something in us from those early childhood teachings that from time to time gives us a moment's pause. I'm not saying we all go around day after day with our hearts on our sleeves, crying our eyes out because we've let Mommy and Daddy down. It's not that simple. Rather, it's a guilt that is deeply entrenched within us, so deeply, in fact, that most of us aren't even aware of it. But it is an operative fac-

tor in the way we perceive ourselves, in the way we lead our lives, even in the way we achieve sexual release and gratification. Some of us are driven to overachieve in business by it, becoming tremendously powerful and wealthy. Others never reach their possible levels at all, held back by a sense of inadequacy that prevents them from going for more than the bare minimum. In the extreme, a few of us are driven right out of the real world, into psychosis, schizophrenia or suicide.

For the majority of us though, it just lurks around the edge of our egos, giving an occasional bump to our sense of self-worth. It makes us feel the least bit jittery about our lives from time to time. If you don't accept the fact that all of us are to some degree dealing with guilt feelings that arise from our sexuality, the rest of this won't make much sense.

We all know that "sex is dirty." And that homosex is worse yet. Still, we do it. We enjoy it, positively revel in it. Because of that, some gays feel they have to pay for it, have to be punished for it. Again, a gross oversimplification of a very complex mental dilemma. But while those fine folks were teaching us that what we later found ourselves doing was wrong, we were also learning that crime must surely be followed by punishment. Degrading sex can be that "punishment." Being used and abused, until all the defenses and justifications have been stripped away and the bare mental bones are left, one can get rid of the current load of guilt that's been building up. Handing out the "punishment" can be equally as cleansing an experience. I am neither a looney or a simpleton, and the fact that I feel compelled to point that out says something about just how foolish I feel laying this all out. But I know from experience that it works for me - and for a lot of other gay men as well.

I know I'm not the only man in the world who gets into all this. Many people can get into the head trips. That's when both partners go into a kind of neutral gear mentally. They play a game, only instead of pretending that a boulder is a flying saucer and the dog is a visitor from Mars, one of them becomes the top and one the bottom. They may pretend they're both in the British Royal Air Force and one is the Sergeant who is "breaking in" the new Private, or one is the policeman who is "arresting and interrogating" the other. There are infinite variations. The game isn't the important part; it's the playing and the ability to do so.

All this may sound a little silly. Two grown men playing games and pretending to be things they aren't. I suppose, in a way, it is. It's also a lot of fun, if for no other reason than the pure happy hell of it. The pleasure alone makes it worthwhile. More importantly, for many people it provides a safety valve.

YOU'VE SEEN THE REST...NOW SEE THE BEST!

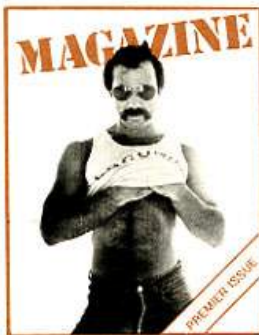
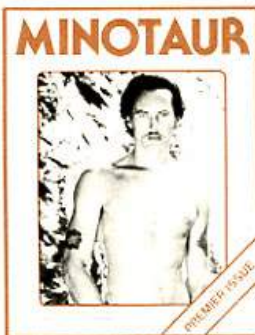
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BY JERE REAL

"There are times in everyone's life," muses writer James Kirkwood, "when you just *have* to believe that whoever is in charge *up there* (he gestures heavenward) simply plans for everything to go wrong for you."

The Pulitzer-Prize winning co-author of the hit musical, *A Chorus Line*, was talking with students on a Virginia college campus about the plot of one of his plays, the 1975 drama, *P.S., Your Cat is Dead*. That play — a less than successful production when done in New York — dealt with an out-of-work actor for whom everything

"If there is
one central idea in my
novels and plays"

— *A Chorus Line*,

Good Times, Bad Times,

Some Kind of Hero —

"then it is survival."

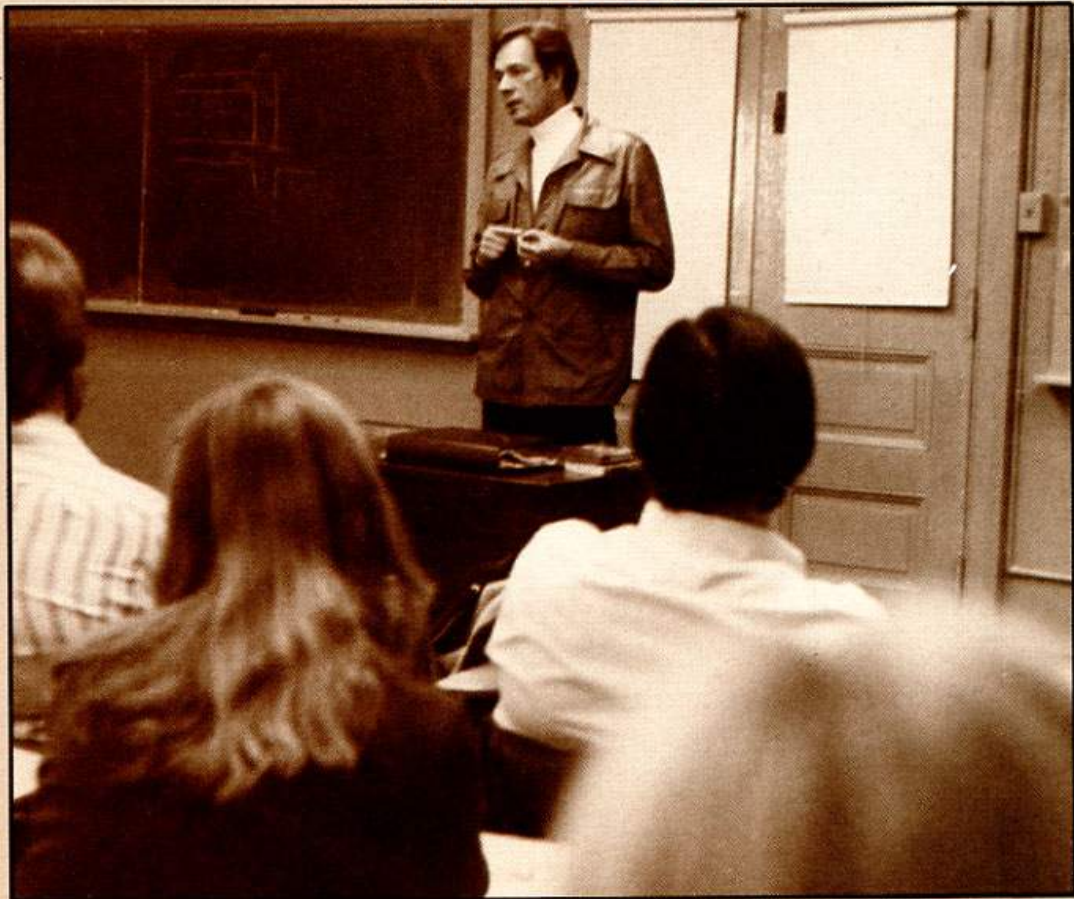
suddenly went sour one bizarre New Year's Eve. However, Kirkwood might have been telling the students about his own life.

Kirkwood's life, as viewed now from his mid-forties, has been an erratic history of severe ups-and-downs, a veritable battering of happenings that might have disconcerted, even destroyed, a less resilient personality. Indeed, the title of his successful 1968 novel, *Good Times, Bad Times*, well might have served as the title of his own autobiography.

Following the enormous success of *A Chorus Line*, Kirkwood has begun lecturing on campuses about his writing, and in

AN INTERVIEW
WITH
JAMES
KIRKWOOD

Photos by Jere Real



Author Kirkwood discusses the alleged New Orleans conspiracy plot to kill President Kennedy with a college political science class.

his talks to students, he warns them about such fluctuations in personal fortune.

"I suppose that if there is one theme, one central idea, in my novels and plays," he said recently in Virginia, "then it is survival."

"That is, how a person copes, comes through the sudden crises that fate, or whatever, deals them."

If fate has frowned on Kirkwood at times in his past, it certainly seems to have smiled on him lately. In addition to the success of *A Chorus Line*, he now has a new novel in the works; he anticipates the filming of one of his earlier novels, *Good Times, Bad Times*; he has just completed the screenplay for a film of his most recent novel, *Some Kind of Hero*. There are also some movie plans for that troublesome play, *P.S., Your Cat Is Dead*.

As he lectures around the country these days, Kirkwood tells his audiences how he came to be a writer quite by accident. He turned to it, he says, "as something to fall back on" when he wasn't successful getting jobs as an actor. During his twenties, Kirkwood had worked more or less regularly in a variety of stage roles in New York shows as well as in regional and road company productions. Once, for four years, he was a featured regular on the CBS-TV soap opera, *Valiant Lady*. "I was son of *Valiant Lady*," he says with detached irony today.

"At about age thirty, I began to feel the need for something to do when acting roles didn't turn up. I guess I had always had this idea that I was going to be a big Hollywood star."

So he enrolled in a creative writing class at UCLA, and, there, one of his class projects turned into his first novel, *There Must Be a Pony*.

"But..." he adds about his writing career, "if anyone had ever told me that fifteen years later, I'd get a Pulitzer Prize for something I'd written, I'd have said they were crazy."

Kirkwood is the son of the silent film stars Lila Lee and James Kirkwood, Sr., and after their divorce, he spent an unsettled childhood and adolescence living in Hollywood, New York, Ohio, on a ranch, or wherever his parents (who shared custody) happened to be working at the moment. His first novel, published in 1960, reflects that background and relates the misadventures of a young boy in the sometimes insecure and neurotic environment of Hollywood. In the book, the boy Josh finds the corpse of his mother's fiancé — "a man I had hoped would become my step-father," Kirkwood says — in a hammock in the garden of their Hollywood mansion. The man had a bullet in his head. The event, Kirkwood admits, is straight from life — his life.

"I am the Josh of that book, just as I am the Peter Kilburn of *Good Times, Bad*

Times," He casually mentions, too, that between the age of twelve and seventeen, he found five dead bodies (three suicides, two others), an unusual set of circumstances that lead him as a teenager to think that "finding bodies was to be my career!"

In *Good Times, Bad Times*, his highly praised second novel, Kirkwood wrote about a teenage boy at a New England prep school (he had attended one for a year) who kills his headmaster. "In real life, the headmaster was a sick man... really quite mad. I hated him. In real life, I did not kill him," he says, "...but I wanted to many times. And in the book I did."

Ironically, the school where he spent such an unhappy eighteen-year year has asked him back to speak to their students, but the writer explains, "I've never been

"At about age thirty, I began to feel the need for something to do when acting roles didn't turn up. I guess I always had this idea that I was going to be a big Hollywood star."

back. I just wouldn't feel comfortable doing it, so I haven't done it."

Good Times, Bad Times was announced for film production some years ago, but the picture kept getting delayed. "The problem was," Kirkwood says, "that another film based on a prep school novel came out and didn't do as well as expected, so the project for my book got shelved."

Now the film is set to be made once more. Shooting was scheduled to begin in October, 1977, he said. The cast "will have Cliff Robertson as the sadistic headmaster of the school. Peter McDermott — he did 'Equus' with Richard Burton in New York — will play the part of Peter."

"I think Jane Alexander may do Mrs. Hoyt in the film," he added, "and Dorothy Loudon will be Fat Patty. A young man named Dennis Christopher will play Jordan." Kirkwood said that Christopher "has been in two films already, but neither has yet been released. One is by Robert Altman. I saw his screen test, and he's really quite good." The film will be produced, he said, by James Bradley, but the director has not yet been selected (at the time of this interview). "We're having some conferences on that soon."

"You know, I'm going to play a part in

that film too... the boy's lawyer... I mean, why the Hell NOT? Write myself some good roles. I'm going to do the same thing in the film of *Some Kind of Hero*, too. In that, I'll play one of the military officers."

Between his first two novels, Kirkwood wrote and saw produced his first Broadway play, *Unhealthy to be Unpleasant*. Produced in New York in 1966 with Tony Randall and Thelma Ritter, the play, he says, was based somewhat on the character of actor Clifton Webb. That first theatrical outing did not fare well. *UTBU*, as the play came to be known, opened during a New York City transit strike and closed within a week.

"Yet," he muses, "you know, I still do well with that play on small royalties. It's not a play that's been done a lot, but still, some amateur groups and regional theatres do it occasionally, and I get a few thousand out of it now and then."

In 1970, Kirkwood turned from theatre and fiction to non-fiction reporting, and he produced a book about New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison's investigation and prosecution of businessman Clay Shaw on charges of conspiracy to kill President John F. Kennedy.

"The entire thing was kind of a nightmare," Kirkwood says, recalling the events in New Orleans. He was there for a year doing research and covering the trial of Shaw. He tells of his own telephone being bugged while there, and how one crazy morning he had a peculiar conversation — quite by accident — with his "buggers." The New Orleans situation during the Shaw trial "had a cast of characters," he sighs reflectively, "that would do justice to a Fellini film."

"I was just a disinterested observer at first," he points out, "since I've always loved trials. I'm not a great believer myself in conspiracy theories. But I do believe that if you're going to try and prove one exists, then you ought to try and get the right people who are involved."

Talking with a political science class on a recent college visit, Kirkwood said he believes that most people "like to believe" in conspiracies, however. "It fulfills a kind of need we have to think that someone else must know something about events that we don't know." To illustrate to the class, he cited a recent Hollywood cocktail party he had attended:

"Here were all these celebrities — film stars and writers and directors and so on — and the one person at the party EVERYONE wanted to meet was John Dean, who was also there! And it's because they think he knows something that they don't about the events of Watergate."

Kirkwood has not forgotten one of his own more recent "bad times," the opening of the short-lived New York production of *P.S., Your Cat Is Dead*. Ironically, that play's failure in New York coincided with

the successful opening of *A Chorus Line*. "That was a strange time for me," he says today. "I really felt schizoid about it all. I was rushing from one show's rehearsal to the other's. Then, when *Chorus Line* did so well and the critics really let Cat have it, I really had this manic-depressive thing going all at once." He feels the play was treated unfairly by the New York critics, and he still has hopes of a New York revival—in which he would get to play the part of Jimmy.

"The critics!" he sighs. "One of them wrote that the play was a thinly disguised drama about homosexuality. If I were writing about homosexuality, then they'd know it!" Another production, set for the West Coast, of *P.S., Your Cat is Dead* was marred by the murder of its star, Sal Mineo, shortly before the play was to open. "That was a terrible shock to me," Kirkwood says, "since he was a fine actor and a good friend of mine."

But Kirkwood's *Cat* may yet prove to have nine lives. There was a highly successful production this past year in Boston which was transplanted to Provincetown last summer. In that version, Stephan Driscoll played Vito and Joseph Wilkins did Jimmy. Kirkwood was on hand for the Provincetown opening, but it was not one of his "good times." He recalls: "The cat I wrote about in the play's title was really a cat of my own—named Bobby Seale—and in real life, he *did* die just before I was to attend the opening last summer. So, you can imagine my feelings at hearing the play's dialogue that evening!"

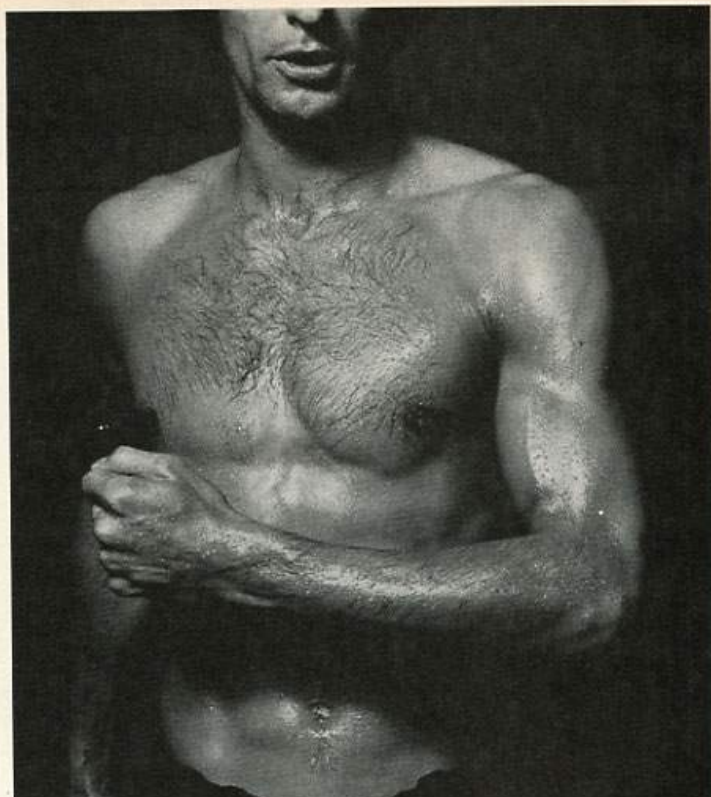
The playwright also wants to do a film of *P.S., Your Cat is Dead*. "I think I'll just do it. I mean, really, why not? And damn it, I'm going to play Jimmy. Fuck it, why not? Christ knows I'm close enough to the part." The actor of the play, he admits, again is drawn from his own experiences as an actor.

"So, I'm going to do it. I'll co-produce the film ... with Jerry Paonessa. I've always wanted to play that part, so, we're going to do it as soon as I finish the new novel I'm working on. We'll get a good Vito and a good Kate, shoot it on-location in New York on a low budget. Why the Hell not?"

The immense success of *A Chorus Line* has led Kirkwood's career into one of his "good time" phases. "I just hope nothing changes," he adds.

"It is certainly a reassuring feeling, even now, to walk down the street in the theatre district of New York and see that marquee all lit up on the theatre and to know that five years from now, it'll still be there and the show still running." And he points out, too, that there are West Coast and London companies of the musical. He recently visited England, doing a series of lectures on the way over aboard the

(Continued on page 89)



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GAY THEATRE

GAYS IN THE MARKETPLACE VS. GAYS FOR THEMSELVES

PART I / BY DON SHEWEY

LAURA: [hardly daring to suggest it] But Bill ... you don't think Tom is ... [She stops. Bill looks at her a moment, his answer is in his silence.] Oh, Bill!
from Tea and Sympathy, by Robert Anderson, 1953

FRANK: Are you a homosexual?

JAY: I'm the homosexual!

from The Haunted Host, by Robert Patrick, 1972

What is gay theatre? How do you define it? What are its parameters? What is its audience? Does a definition of gay theatre involve value judgments about literary merit and attitudes toward gay life? And what does gay have to do with theatre?

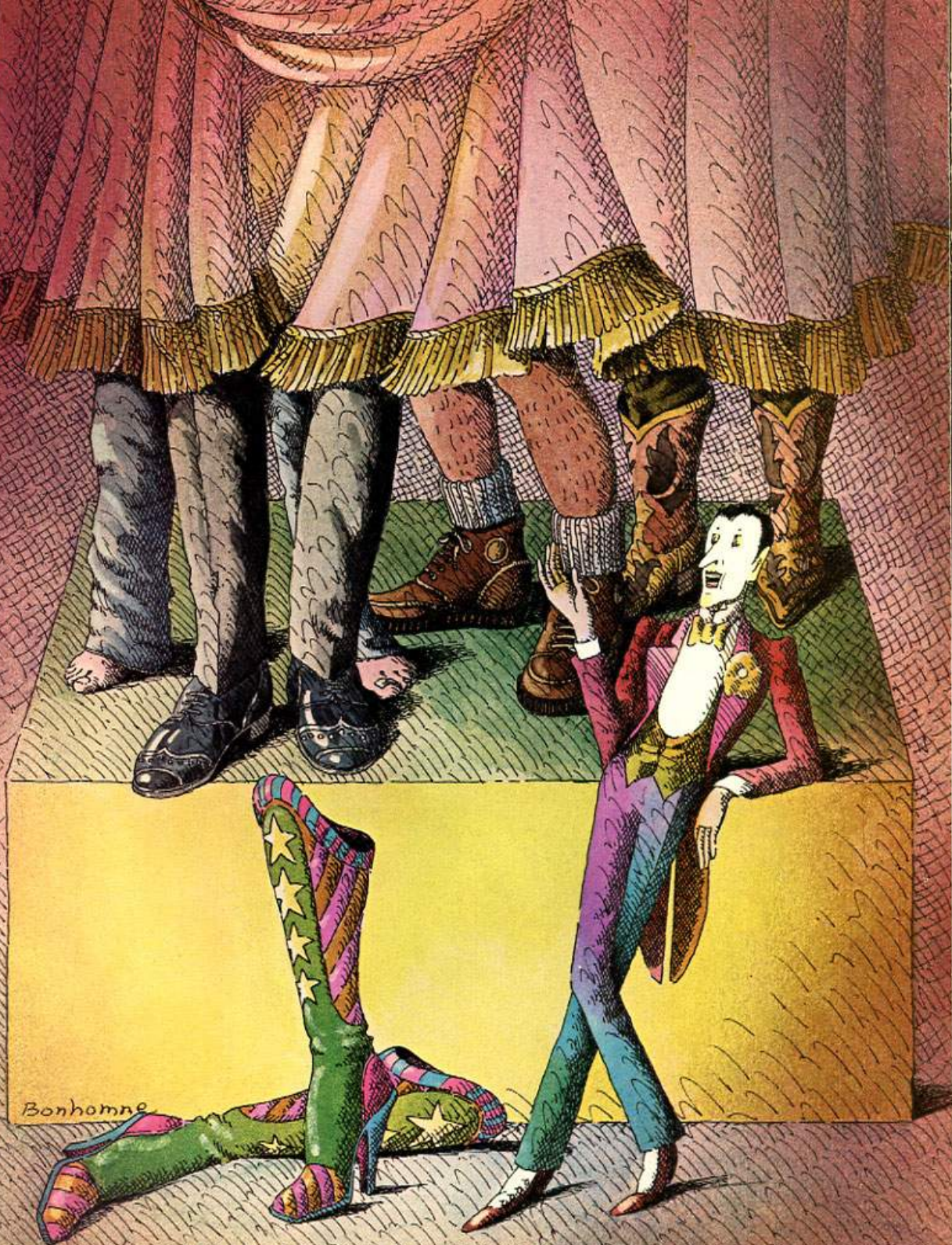
Try conducting a survey asking those questions to any group of people — large or small, random or hand-picked, gay or straight — and the chances are the consensus will be no consensus at all. Yet, despite its lack of a concrete definition, the term "gay theatre" is far from meaningless. I for one have no qualms about talking about gay theatre, even though I freely admit, when pressed for a precise definition, that the more I examine the term, the less sure I am exactly what it means, how it should be applied, and even if gay theatre constitutes an identifiable genre within the realm of drama.

Still, I have a good idea of what I mean when I say gay theatre. I mean any work for the stage in which gay characters and gay lifestyles have some kind of visibility, and I like to make that a firm rule. An argument could be made that anything written by an open or acknowledged gay playwright is, *per se*, gay theatre. But a

close study of the collected works of gay playwrights such as Oscar Wilde and Tennessee Williams turns up very few plays (if any at all) that deal specifically with gay characters or homosexuality. A corollary to this is the temptation to read into plays homosexual interpretations that are not apparently provided by the author; this is often done with the plays of Shakespeare, as well as modern classics like Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and even contemporary plays like Peter Shaffer's *Equus*. Sometimes gay interpretations of these plays contain illuminating insights, but just as often they reek of overstrain and projection. If you want badly enough to believe that *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* is a gay allegory, I have no doubt that you can eventually succeed, but really, who cares?

I do care about plays in which homosexuality and gay characters are out in the open, which means that some of these portrayals are bound to be distorted, unrealistic, oversimplified visions of gay life. But visibility in the media, as in society-at-large, is, I think, a positive goal for gay people. Visibility is the best tool we

(Continued on page 81)



Bonhomme

BY DAVID MITCHELL

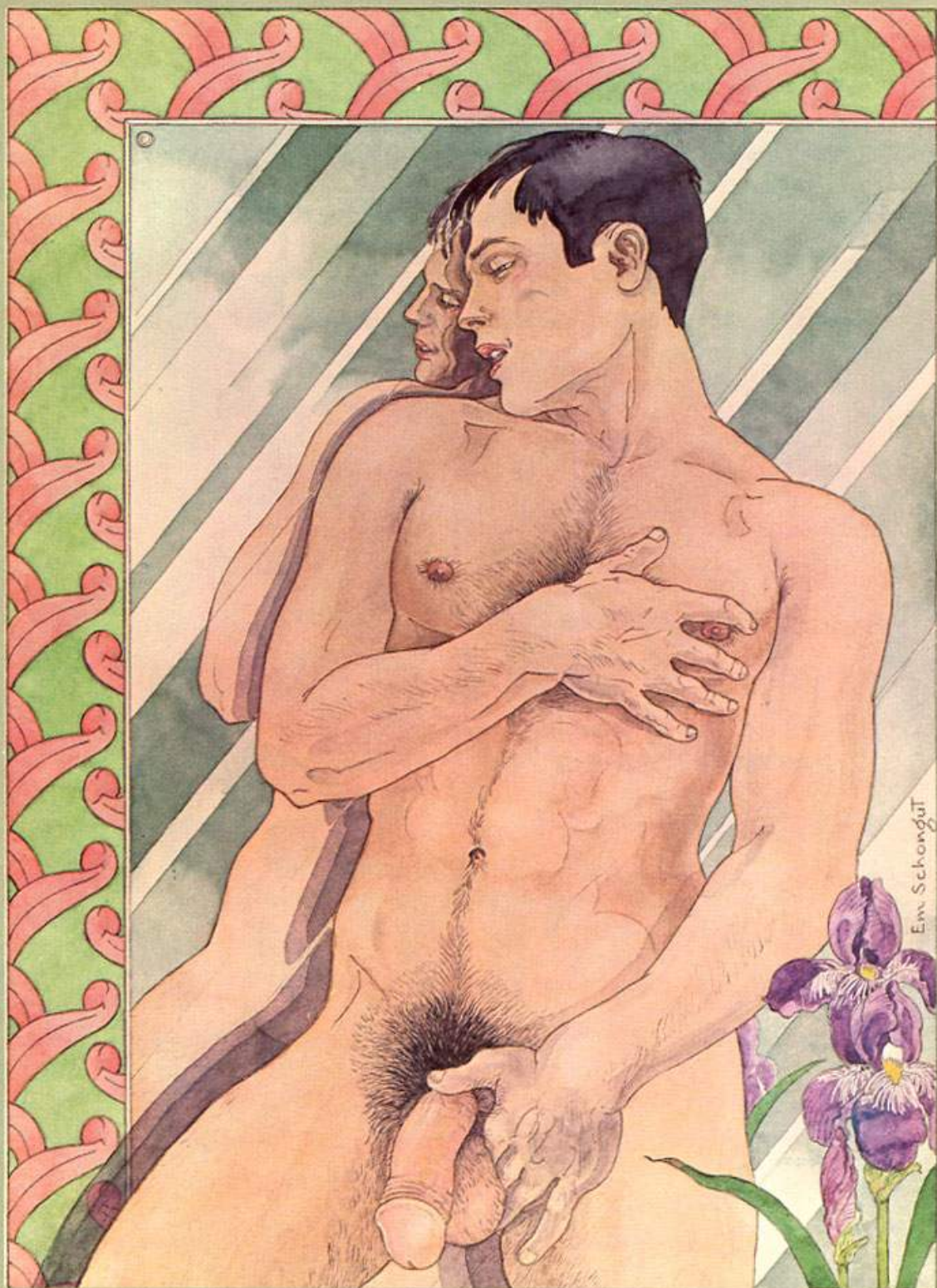
I waited a few weeks before calling the number (quickly scribbled on a napkin and handed to me at the opening of the new bar.) An escort and model service, it said. Shit man, that meant a whore house, a call boy service, whatever. And why not? An easy way to make some bread. Bread I needed badly.

The voice on the other end of the line sounded businesslike. Rather abrupt and cold. He suggested a meeting for the following evening at eight o'clock.

Deciding on my image in advance, I dressed in worn levis, sweat shirt (white, to show off the tan) boots with a two inch heel — "The Cowboy look." Checking myself out in mirrors, I liked what I saw. Worth at least fifty, I thought. Worth a million, really. *(Continued on page 91)*

ILLUSTRATED BY E. SCHONGUT

ONE IN A MILLION



GAY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

THERE'S
NO BUSINESS
COUNCIL
LIKE A GAY
BUSINESS
COUNCIL

He was a systems analyst—his lover, a teacher. They were both tired of the rat race and bored with the nine-to-five. They had this romantic urge, with which some of us might empathize, to open a bookstore. After all, everyone they knew could read so it was bound to be a lucrative business. It wasn't. At least not at the beginning. Slowly but surely the problems of owning and operating a small business began to unfold. Customer problems. Legal problems. Accounting problems. Insurance problems. They sought help and advice by joining the Greater Gotham Business Council where they encountered comrades and peers who share a similar perspective about life. By that, we mean they joined a gay business council.

The Greater Gotham Business Council (GGBC) of New York is just one of many such organizations set up in key American cities and composed almost entirely of gay entrepreneurs. In San Francisco, there's the Golden Gate Business Association (the first of such organizations to form); in Los Angeles, there is the L.A. Community Business and Professional Guild, a relatively young group with over 300 members in its ranks already; there's a group in Boston, another in Philadelphia, and by the time you read this there should be groups in Houston and Washington, D.C.

It's the beginning of an important new gay consciousness, which will hopefully deliver a strong leadership as gays unite to support other gays, not only by sharing ideas and trading retail, but by presenting a solid business image. The effect is liberating as closet doors swing open, and these organizations begin to demand equal rights and insure protection for their own kind.

To concentrate on the GGBC as a case in point, this organization (with some 150 members at the time of writing) began less than two years ago as a clandestine group, meeting in basements of apartment houses, slowly mobilizing and growing. The seeds of its development began in the mind of Bruce Voeller (co-head of the National Gay Task Force of New York), who had known of the existence of the Golden Gate Business Association, and had hoped he could establish the same in his city.

One day a young man, Alan Noseworthy III, who was starting an antique shop in Greenwich Village specializing in art-deco items, went to Bruce Voeller with the idea of obtaining a gay accountant. If he was going to give his business to anyone, at least let the person be gay, he reasoned. This was the catalyst for Bruce Voeller. It was time to start a business council in New York! The organization would be established to help the gay business person who needed advice to keep his small business alive.

Early in 1976 Bruce and Alan met with several others: Ray Bedard and John Topash, owners of Eagle Leathers; Jerry Schiff, certified public accountant; Bill Bland, director of Man's Image Studios; and George Terzian, attorney. Within two months of their initial meeting, this group had grown into an organization with more than fifty charter members. They established by-laws similar to those of the group in San Francisco. They did not advertise; people could join only through sponsorship by another business council member. There was never any mention of the word gay because some members felt they could not be associated with a gay enterprise; they had too much at stake with their own businesses. It began as a closed and very closeted endeavor.

Eventually, however, a natural law prevailed—if you do not grow, you die. Things could not remain the same at GGBC if members wanted a viable business organization. Either they became known to the public at large or they ran the risk of death by attrition. Finally, nearly one year after their inauguration as a group, a news release was sent out to major gay journals detailing the existence of GGBC.

A corner had been turned; the GGBC would no longer remain in the commercial closet. It was now on the road to becoming a potent and open gay organization. This did not sit well with some of the members; approximately 30 percent of the membership did not renew because they did not agree, it is presumed, with the direction that GGBC was taking.

The president of GGBC, Jerry Schiff, himself a formidable spokesman for the group, says: "It was actually Anita Bryant who made us realize that we could no longer remain closeted. A certain gay consciousness demanded that we show our faces and be counted. She made us realize how tenuous our legal rights were. We no longer could say, 'I don't like what's happening out there,' and then just shut up. If we were going to be a viable organization, we had to come out, and we had to come out strong."

The question of "coming out" is difficult enough from a specific, individual point of view; it is that much more complicated when it involves myriad personalities. Just how far should the closet door be opened? Just how feasible is it to be political? "We decided," explains Schiff, "to remain just that—a business council. But we also realized that business affects politics just as politics affects business. We could not cloister ourselves away from politics, so we are now represented in the New York Political Action Council, and through them, we have a voice in politics. We have a pulsebeat as to what is going on."

If one were to word-associate the

THERE'S NO BUSINESS COUNCIL LIKE A GAY BUSINESS COUNCIL

phrase "gay entrepreneur, the immediate association might be: pornographic bookstore owner, or proprietor of a bar or clubhouse. But a random sampling of GGBC shows quite a different picture. Here, one will encounter artists, lawyers, accountants, florists, boutique owners, travel agents, insurance brokers, advertising executives. During those early stages at GGBC, only self-employed people were admitted into the group. This was soon discovered to be too limiting. The laws were then loosely interpreted so that an individual could represent a company such as AT&T or Mobil Oil so long as he worked in a decision-making capacity. This too has been changed so that any professional may join. "Don't limit your horizons" seems to be the working theory.

Much is changing as the organization continues to evolve. Formerly, the monthly meetings were largely business-oriented. A speaker would talk about how to hire and fire personnel; someone else would talk about accounting techniques; a representative from the gay Alcoholics Anonymous would deliver a sermon; or someone from the gay Odyssey House would detail programs available to gays. But recently, this approach has been disbanded. Small seminars on such topics have been set up for those interested, and the larger business meetings deal with more general topics.

At a recent meeting, for example, Ray Hartman, of the Gay Rights National Lobby, a lawyer and a member of the L.A. group, spoke on society's concept of normality and its effect on the homosexual community. He was an eloquent speaker who mesmerized the audience. At an earlier meeting, Robert L. Livingston, appointed by Mayor Beame to represent the gay community on the NYC Commission on Human Rights, talked about the involvement of gays in politics. His talk was another step in leading the group collectively toward gay consciousness — which should eventually lead the way to gay clout.

The business council is also a social meeting ground. Before each meeting there is an open bar, and of late, buffet suppers have been organized. Says George Terzian, vice president of the group: "Gays like getting together and the business setting is appealing to people who are not necessarily bar people. This way you can mix socially and professionally, reaping the benefits of both. Our cocktail hour has always been profit-making for the gay establishments where we hold our meetings (usually the discos Les Mouches and Experiment Four). And

What began from a simple question - "Do you know of a gay accountant?" - has multiplied into a healthy state of affairs. The GGBC and all of the other business councils are simply the exponents of greater consciousness and visibility in the decade ahead.

while I don't know of any serious relationships which have developed, 'affaires', like novellas — they're all around. The social aspect is very important, and for some, it may be the very reason to join. That's why we have all our members wear badges to identify themselves and their businesses. It makes things easier."

One of the major services available to GGBC members is a referral directory which gives members exposure to fellow members and their business operations. If you need a lawyer, look through the directory; if you want flowers delivered, look through the directory. A ten percent discount is given to members. A member can place a "position available" ad in the directory; "situations wanted" is open to members and non-members alike. Also, during the year there are business-associated happenings such as last winter's Christmas Fair, which gave retailers, craftspeople and service businesses the opportunity to familiarize other members with what they had to offer.

Part of GGBC's plan is to motivate members toward meeting community needs. Last summer a blood bank drive to insure that gay people in need of blood would get it attracted only 30 volunteers. It was particularly disheartening because the drive followed on the heels of the Everard Baths fire. Says George Terzian:

"It's just very hard to get gay people motivated. Even within GGBC, it was always a case of some people doing all of the work. Now things are changing. More people are becoming involved."

Jerry Schiff sees the group's potential as enormous and the benefits greater still. "We're looking into health benefits. We're thinking about chartered planes for vacations. The L.A. group is setting up a retirement home for gay people. The motivation is high to get things done."

"You just have to be aware that we're following an established pattern. The blacks did it in the sixties, the women feminists in the seventies, and the eighties are going to see the rights of gays notably enhanced. Laws can and will be changed and GGBC can help make this happen. It is the beginnings of gay consciousness. We are coming into our very own."

When it comes to specifically identifying what the gay business councils have achieved, it's really a case of projection into the future, for the groups are still going through growing pains and developmental stages.

To quote Ray Hartman of the Los Angeles group: "The benefits at this time are intangible. But basically, the council promotes an atmosphere where gays pull their strength together. I think that at this point, the referral directory is a concrete sign of promoting commerce. Our directory is a bit more comprehensive than that of New York's GGBC in that we list blue-collar professions as well as professional services. We've sent a copy to New York for their inspection; this brings us all a lot closer together."

"But the only way we can combat the ignorance is to educate that element of the uneducated in a 'people to people' approach. Therefore, it is essential that gays stop limiting themselves to just being gay, and that they involve themselves in all kinds of general activities — orphanages, blood drives, etc. Mingle among the people and set an example, that is the only way."

The Manhattan group had a major battle on its hands when the membership voted on the issue of whether or not to accept non-gays into the council. After all, many members felt that part of the appeal of GGBC was that it was (and is) an organization founded by gays to help gay people. It was something that the gay community could call its own; it was a place where you could just be, rather than try to be.

After stormy protests, a certain humanitarian logic prevailed. Lawyer

Michael Lavery clearly stated the case for accepting non-gays. How, he underlined, could someone be deemed acceptable or unacceptable on the basis of sexual orientation. Reverse discrimination, he argued, only fostered and perpetrated the same injustices forced on the gay community. And what could that possibly accomplish?

Corresponding secretary Allan Marshall, the bookstore owner, commented on the question of admitting non-gays, "Well, it's big of us!" But he went on to add, "it really doesn't matter to me as long as the straights realize the main impetus. I wouldn't want to see the day when we became outnumbered and the straights ganged up on us. On a purely emotional level, I wanted it to be all gay. I mean I finally had the time to join a gay organization and I liked the idea."

The Boston organization, in a promotional flyer sent out to recruit members, posed a series of questions, one of which asked: "Do you have to be gay?" The answer: "Why would you?" The GGBC, understanding all of this, voted on the issue in mid-June, with 59 percent of those responding approving admission of non-gay members.

Division in the group, as in any organization, is not uncommon. The GGBC has in its membership a broad spectrum of gay life — from the "Upper East Side" gay, who sports the latest Cerutti or Ralph Lauren, to the "Village" type clad in his uniform of levis, work boots and leather jacket.

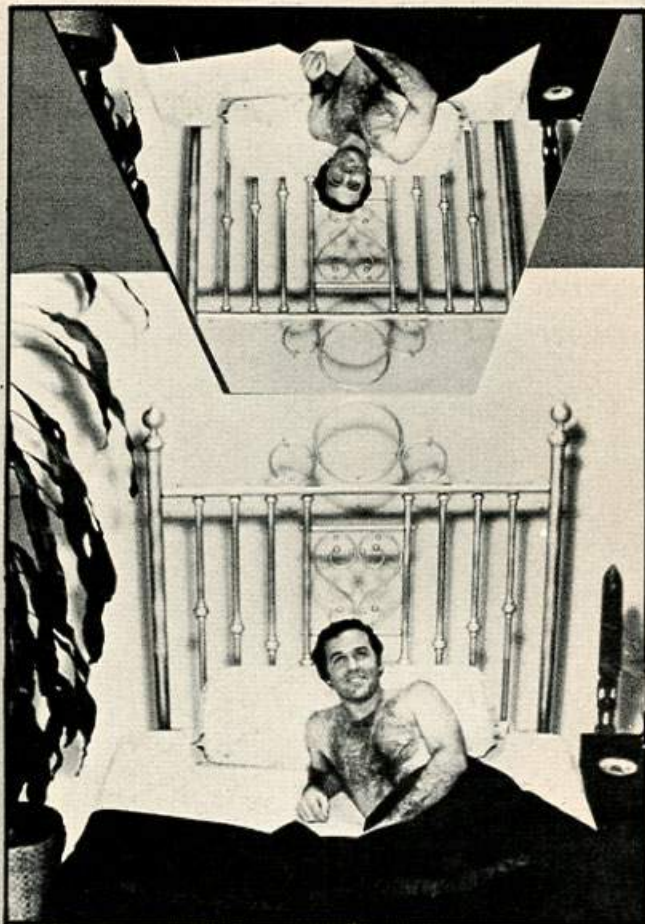
"When the group first started," says George Terzian, "the Village-Chelsea faction dominated. As the group expanded, other people began joining and with them came the uptowners. Some of the Village crowd began to get intimidated or scornful; some have since dropped out. To be honest, the rivalry is sometimes there, but we learn to deal with it and, in a sense, it can be healthy."

Differing points of view in the GGBC, as Terzian suggests, can be dealt with, but what he and the group would like to see are more women joining the ranks. At the present, perhaps ten percent of the membership is female. Schiff and Terzian agree they want more women, "and we've tried to break down the barriers," they explained, "but it's very difficult to get gay women to join."

What began from a simple question — "Do you know of a gay accountant?" — has multiplied into a healthy state of affairs. The GGBC and all of the other business councils are simply the exponents, the purveyors of greater consciousness and visibility in the decade ahead. ■

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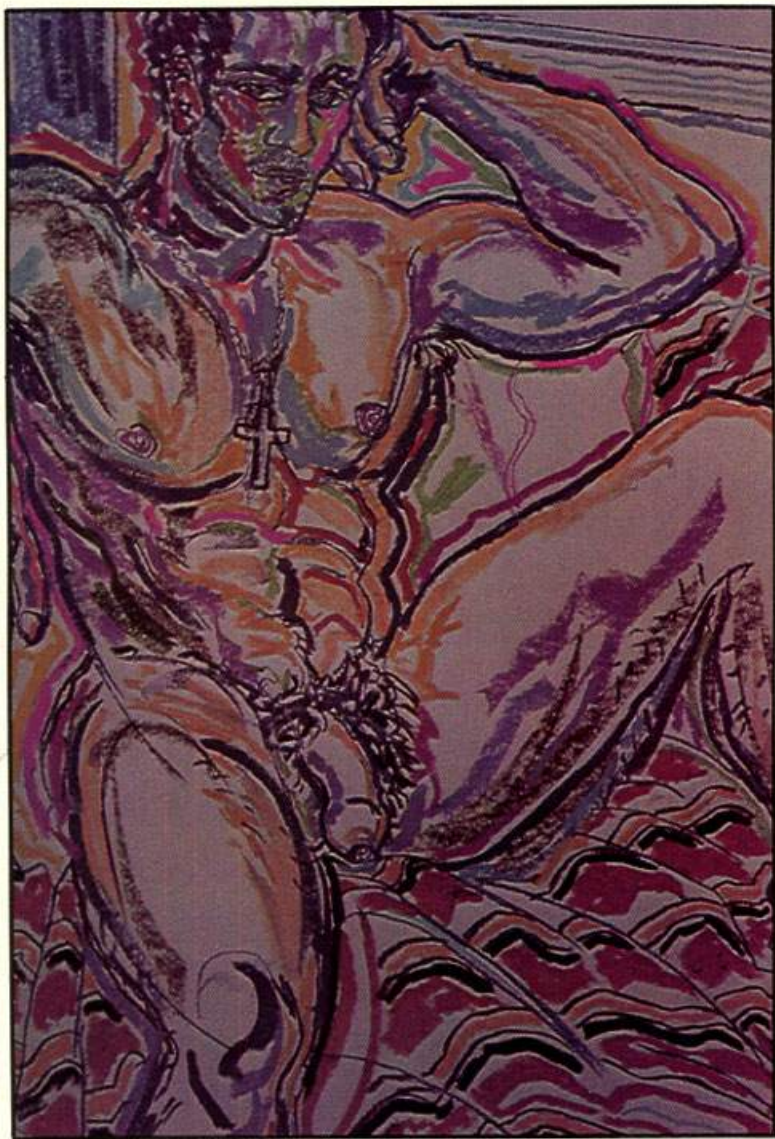


A PORTFOLIO BY HARVEY BOYD

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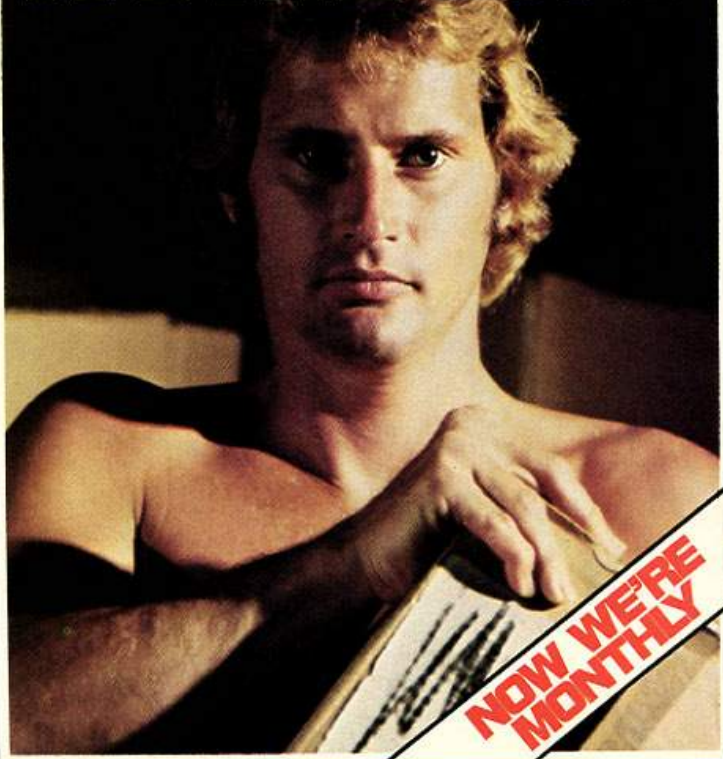
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GAY THEATER (Continued from page 68)

have to get rid of fears, myths, and misconceptions about homosexuality. And an unsympathetic or unrepresentative portrait of gay people can often be as beneficial as the most sensitive one if it succeeds in opening up a dialogue. The best example of this is Mart Crowley's *The Boys in the Band*.

For all intents and purposes, gay theatre began as a result of *The Boys in the Band*, much the same way the gay liberation movement began with Stonewall. In both cases, gays were extant and visible before, but the event was the catalyst for a sudden eruption of activity. But while *The Boys in the Band* is undeniably a turning point in the evolution of gay theatre, its influence must be documented through two entirely different histories. One, the history of the mass-audience image of gays, is rather simple because plays about gays in commercial theatre have received a lot of attention. The other, the history of contemporary theatre that has been informed and influenced by the creative input of gays, is more complex because creative visions are more slippery, more complicated, more dangerous to talk about than specific, finite dramatic characterizations, and also because they are manifest in the work of small theatre companies in New York familiar to few outside the city.

In this article, I have tried to mention and deal with, however briefly, almost all the plays I've ever heard of with visible gay characters or gay concerns. I have seen and/or read perhaps half of these plays; the other half is composed of plays I have only learned about through second-hand sources. Therefore, unless otherwise noted, the inclusion of a play here does not necessarily indicate that the play is well-written or sympathetic to gays. In fact, I have included plays that I have every reason to believe are terrible and other plays about which I have very little information. But I was intrigued in my research to find a surprising quantity of plays with gay content, and I thought it would be of interest to the reader to get a sense of this quantity.

Also, I wish I could say that the use of the word "gay" in this article refers to both men and women. Unfortunately, this is not the case. For reasons attributable partly to the society we live in and partly to the peculiar traditions of the theatre, there has been very little theatre written/created from a lesbian perspective. Gay theatre is as male-dominated as straight theatre. One reason is simply the sexism that is handed down from generation to generation in our patriarchal society; another is that those men who may be inclined to write about gay women often feel incapable of supplying the requisite sensitivity to lesbian/feminist politics; and another is

that, although a great many women are employed in powerful (if unglamorous) technical and administrative theatre jobs, women playwrights are sadly scarce.

In her introduction to *The New Women's Theatre*, poet/playwright Honor Moore perceptively points out, "One appeal of the theatre to writers has been the relative camaraderie it provides; the playwright puts words on paper alone, but the work is brought to fruition in company, with the help of actors and directors. Male exclusion of women from this camaraderie, perhaps more than any other single factor, has been responsible for the lack of a female tradition in playwrighting similar to that which exists in both fiction and poetry." What is needed, obviously, is a proliferation of women writers; more importantly, it is necessary for male theatre artists not only to support but to actively solicit creative participation in the theatre by women. But as it stands now, please bear in mind that in most instances references in this article to "gay theatre" mean "gay male theatre."

THE SIMPLE HISTORY

The history that leads up to *The Boys in the Band* and goes further to *A Chorus Line* and *Streamers* begins in the days when homosexuality was not allowed on the stage under any circumstances. *Sappho*, a play by Alphonse Daudet and Adolphe Belot about the lesbian poet, was first performed in the U.S. in 1895, but when revived in 1900 it caused a great scandal and was banned. In 1926, *The Captive* by Edouard Bourdet and *Sex* by Jane Mast (better known as Mae West) met similar fates. West's *The Drag* (1927) and *Pleasure Man* (1928) were also banned because of their gay content. And as late as 1944, theatres refused to rent to the producers of Dorothy and Howard Baker's *Trio* because the play dealt with an older woman's "unnatural" feelings for a girl.

When homosexuality did begin to whisper its name onstage, it was usually in melodramatic treatments of false accusation (Robert Anderson's *Tea and Sympathy*, Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour*, briefly in Arthur Miller's *View from the Bridge* and Allen Drury's *Advise and Consent*), vice (William Inge's *The Boy in the Basement*), or violence (Inge's *Natural Affection* and *The Cell*, Frank Marcus's *The Killing of Sister George*, LeRoy Jones's *The Toilet*).

By the 1950s and 60s, somewhat more noble attempts to portray homosexuals had begun to appear, although the gay content was still largely between the lines and often as not gays were ultimately seen as unhappy and pathetic. This group would include famous plays such as Noel Coward's *Song at Twilight*, Shelagh De-

(Continued on page 82)

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GAY THEATER

laney's *A Taste of Honey*, Peter Shaffer's *Five Finger Exercise*, and Edward Albee's *Malcolm* (adapted from James Purdy's novel) and *Tiny Alice*, as well as lesser-known works like *The Immoralist* adapted from André Gide's novel by Ruth and Augustus Goetz, Terence Rattigan's *Man and Boy*, Arthur Laurents' *The Enclave*, Roger Gelbert's *Quaint Honour*, Michael MacLinnair's one-man show *The Importance of Being Oscar*, John Osborne's *A Patriot for Me* and *West of Suez*, Hugh Wheeler's *Big Fish*, *Little Fish* and *Look! We've Come Through!*, Thomas Kilroy's *The Death and Resurrection of Mr. Roche*, and Christopher Hampton's *When Did You Last See my Mother?* In the late 60s, James Goldman's *The Lion in Winter*, Charles Dyer's *Staircase*, and *Fortune and Men's Eyes* by John Herbert made breakthroughs in the honest treatment of gays, particularly the last, a frank examination of homosexuality in a Canadian prison.

In addition, mention should be made of three playwrights from this pre-Boys in the Band era whose open homosexuality informed their innovative and successful theatrical works. Although Jean Genet's plays (*Deathwatch*, *The Maids*, *The Balcony*, etc.), contain much less homosexual content than his novels, his visionary perceptions of sex and power obsessions in human behavior are clearly influenced by his homosexuality and his prison experiences. And the late Joe Orton (whose works include *What the Butler Saw*, *Loot*, and *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*), perfected a dramatic style that was as much concerned with demolishing traditional sex-role expectations as with combining classic farce and absurdist theatre into a topsy-turvy reflection of the chaotic modern world.

Tennessee Williams, who was forthright about his sexuality long before it was anywhere near acceptable, touches on gay themes rarely and, except for his latest play *Vieux Carre*, only in passing (*Streetcar Named Desire*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Suddenly Last Summer*), but there is a very important association between his homosexuality and the female roles which he includes in his sweeping emotional dramas. Actresses often claim that Williams is one of the few modern playwrights who has created rich, complex roles for them to act in; on the other hand, many feminists feel that Williams' women conform to our society's stereotypes of women as weak, neurotic, and masochistic creatures. Behind the paradoxical truth in both statements must stand the perception that Williams' female characters, while they're certainly not models of healthy womanhood, serve as a gallery of the masks which women - and

gay men - have been forced to wear by our male-dominated society.

In effect, that society has responded to the other-ness of women by defining them in an idealized, non-human way as highly emotional, physically weak, dependent, virginal i.e., all the things that men "should not be." Likewise, straight male society has assigned to gay males many of these "feminine" qualities, with the implication that they are inferior when attached to men. In addition, gay men have been assigned the qualities straight men dislike about real (non-idealized) women -

Williams' female characters, while they're certainly not models of healthy womanhood, serve as a gallery of the masks which women — and gay men — have been forced to wear by our male-dominated society.

bitchiness, vulgarity, sexual promiscuity, vanity. Williams has made the link between straight male fantasies of women and gay men and exaggerates them in his female characters (*Streetcar*'s Stella and *Blanche*, *Amanda* and *Laura* in *The Glass Menagerie*, *Maxine* and *Hannah* in *Night of the Iguana*, to name a few) to the point of puncturing the credibility of those images. By making the exterior larger-than-life, even unbelievable, he exposes the interior reality more frankly than straight men would dare to. Williams may be totally unaware that he has done so, but his personal identification with his women as fellow victims of straight male oppression is unmistakable.

In this field of theatre I've been talking about the mass-audience, commercial-based theatre, the straight theatre if you will - the appearance of *The Boys in the Band* signaled another step in the increasing boldness (or tastelessness, to the easily-shocked) of stage productions. Its four letter words made it racy, and its setting the the homosexual milieu gave it a

sort of freak-show attraction. The play's roaring success seemed to indicate that homosexuality was no longer a taboo subject - in fact, that is was commercially viable. This realization proved to be both a step forward and a step backward in the stage image of gays.

On one hand, it enabled writers to deal with homosexuality on a more honest, open level without suffering instant doom; but on the other hand it opened the doors to a flood of sensationalized plays using homosexuality as a kinky novelty. The dichotomy exists to this day. Since 1968, the growing acceptance of gay characters in the theatre has brought about sensitive, well-written though not necessarily positive plays recognizing gay lifestyles.

A sample of these would include: Simon Gray's *Butley* (professor is deserted by both his wife and his boyfriend), Christopher Hampton's *Total Eclipse* (about the love affair between French poets Verlaine and Rimbaud), Charles Lawrence's *My Fat Friend* (comedy about single woman and her gay neighbor), Miguel Pinero's *Short Eyes* (prison drama), James Kirkwood's *P.S. Your Cat Is Dead* (down-and-out actor matches wits with bisexual burglar), Kirkwood and Nicholas Dante's *A Chorus Line* (major character recounts his early career as drag performer), David Rabe's *Streamers* (playful flirtation between two soldiers turns to violence), John Guare's *Rich and Famous* and *Marco Polo Sings a Solo* (each includes a minor character who has one great monologue about his/her unusual sexual history), Neil Simon's *California Suite* (gay actor maintains marriage for appearance's sake), David Rudkin's *Ashes* (husband briefly discusses with wife his past gay activity), Michael Cristofer's *The Shadow Box* (dying man confronts both wife and male lover), and Albert Innaurato's *Gemini* (young man discovers his attraction to his girlfriend's brother).

Two arguable additions to this list are Richard O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror Show*, which features a bisexual transvestite in the lead role, and Terrence McNally's *The Ritz*, a farce set in a gay bathhouse.

But the liberalized atmosphere has also inspired playwrights to produce works, however well-meaning, that exploit gay characters and gay themes for sensationalism or cheap comedy, often with no understanding at all. As this history progresses, only one thing is certain: theatre audiences can hardly avoid seeing gay characters on the stage today, and even if they are incomplete portraits or reworked stereotypes, the visibility is still a plus.

Part 2 of "Gay Theatre" will appear in the June issue of *Blueboy*.

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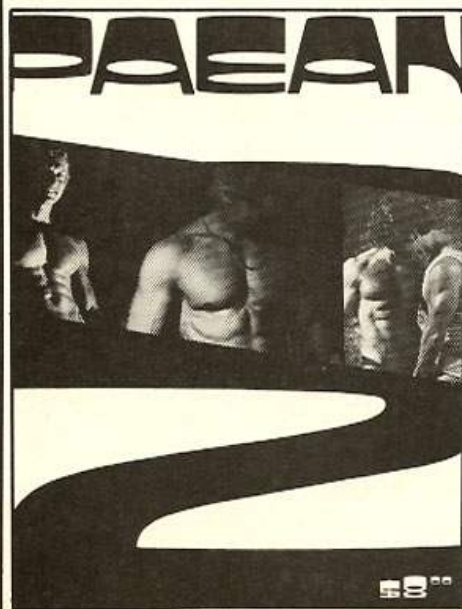
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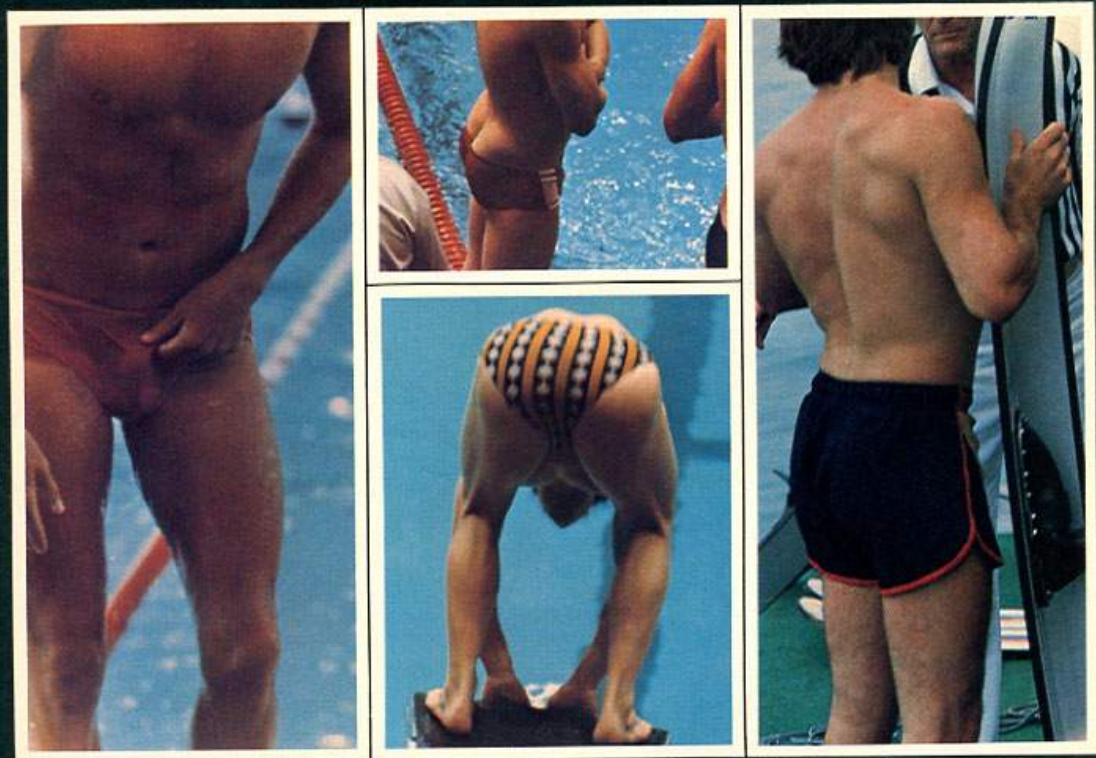
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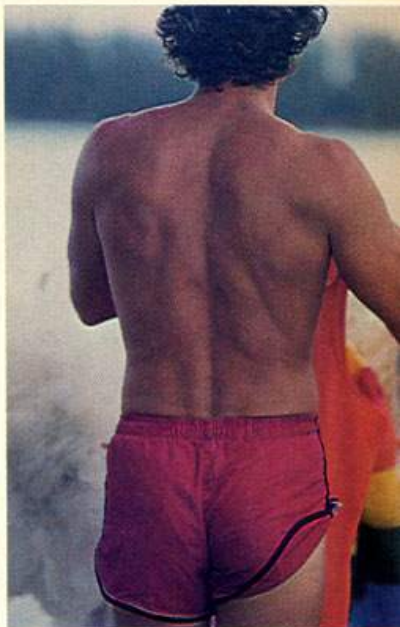
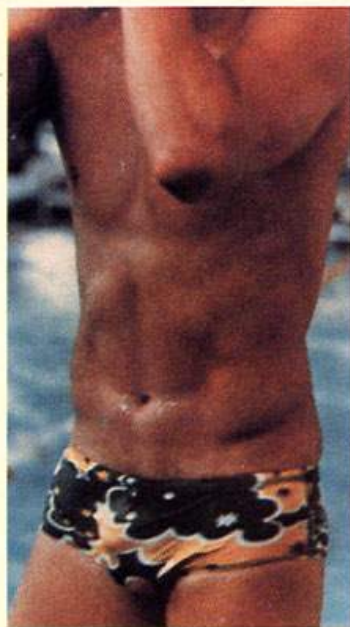
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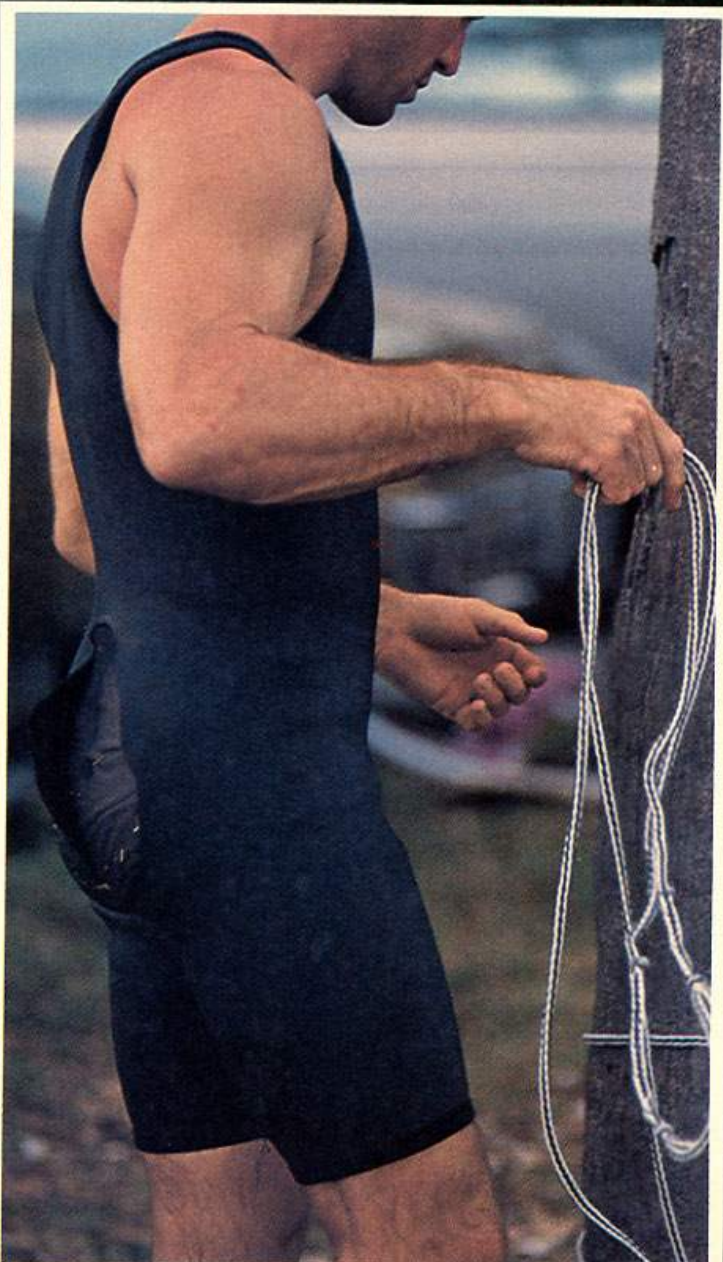


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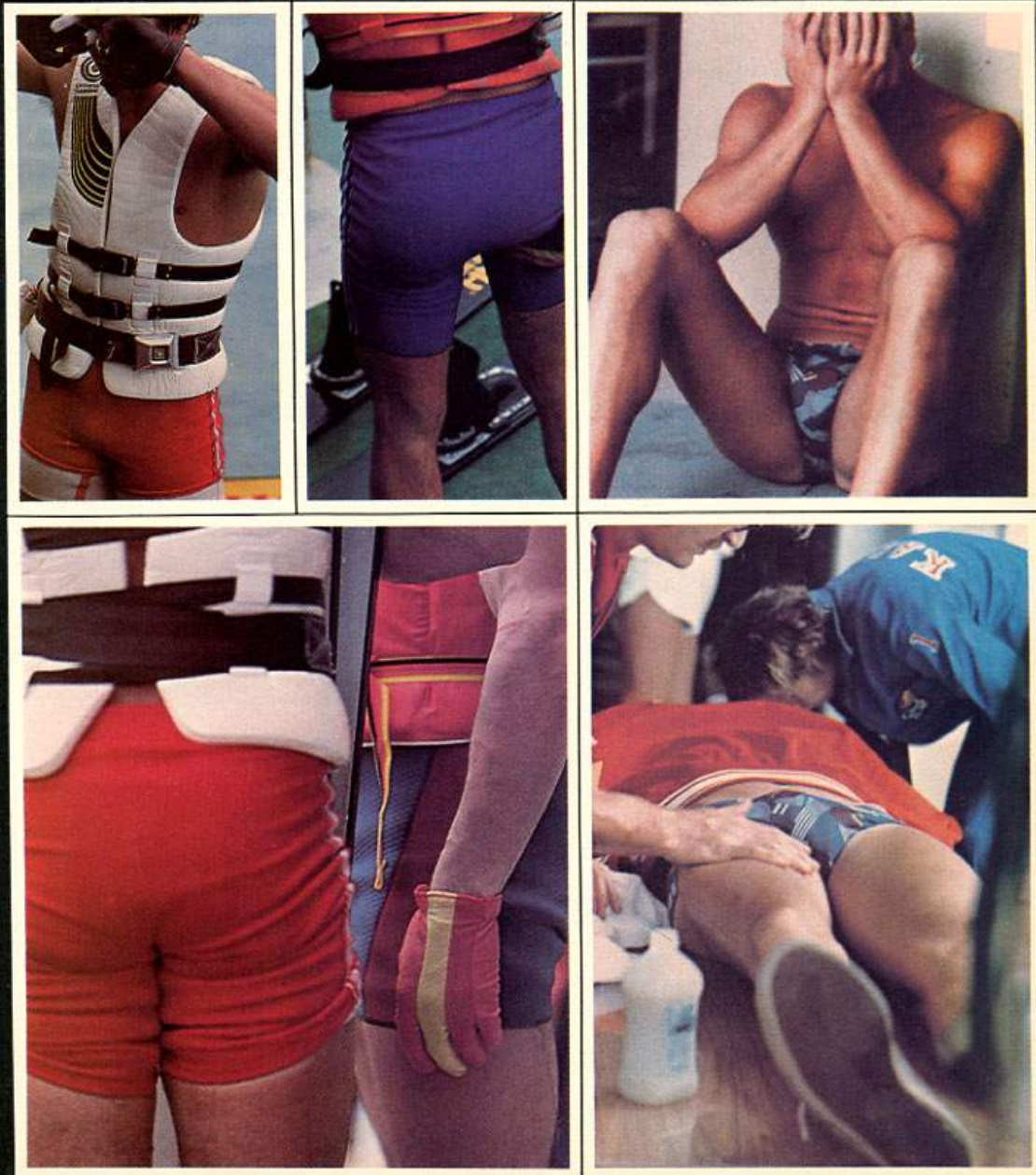
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ON THE WATERFRONT



ON THE WATERFRONT



AN INTERVIEW WITH
JAMES KIRKWOOD
(Continued from page 67)

Queen Elizabeth II about the theatre, touring Cornwall, and finally stopping by to see the London company of *A Chorus Line*.

A film version of *A Chorus Line* is in the works, but that, says Kirkwood, "won't be released before 1980 at the earliest."

The movie version will be produced and directed by Michael Bennett (who did the stage version), "and the word is," Kirkwood says, "that we'll all function on the movie in the same roles we did for the stage version."

"Universal will do the film. I saw Michael just the other day, and he said to me: 'You know, we've got to get together and start thinking about exactly what we are going to do on the film version.'"

"It's not going to be an easy film to do," Kirkwood admits, since he realizes that much of the show's great appeal is derived from its inherent theatricality.

The versatile writer also has several other projects in the works. Most recently, he has completed the script for the film of his last novel, *Some Kind of Hero*. That book, which appeared in 1975 to overwhelmingly favorable reviews, dealt with a returning Vietnam veteran, the "some kind of hero" of the title, who faces severe readjustment problems in the complex American society he reenters in 1972, problems involving violence, sexual identity and crime.

Kirkwood worked diligently on that script all last winter. The film's producers want to get the movie out as soon as possible before a number of other films about Vietnam veterans are released. "I just hole up out at East Hampton (where he lives most of the time) and write," he said.

"So, *Some Kind of Hero* is supposed to be done. Paramount has it," he said. "The producer will be Jerry Paonessa... there's no cast yet since they want to wait until they have a director. So the search is on for a director."

He's also been working on a film project for a Mel Brooks' movie. "It's to be a farce," he says, "based on the old 1930's film *To Be or Not To Be*, the comedy with Jack Benny and Carole Lombard. It'll be a very funny film, all about the German invasion of Poland, and what happens when this Shakespearean theatre company gets mixed up with the Gestapo and the Underground. I'm calling this version *Poland, My Poland*, and it's designed to be a vehicle for Mel and his wife, Anne Bancroft. I've written the first draft and

(Continued on page 98)

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■ 10001 THE STAR'S LOVERS

The stranger reached out and grabbed Phil closer. He kissed him passionately on his stomach and then between his thighs, moaning with pleasure. Phil thought of the money he needed as he plunged his throbbing meat between the moist lips of the hungry stranger.

■ 10002 HUSTLIN' LIKE DAD

"I got us a three-way," Bob announced to his son. "Great," said Tony. He recalled that he and his father had not made it together since their first time. Looking at Tony, Bob felt himself growing excited in spite of himself. He saw some movement under the towel covering Tony's crotch.

■ 10003 COACH BROWN'S BOYS

Coach Brown had a perfect deal. As the school's track coach, he could lounge around the locker and watch all the hunky young studs walking around naked. Occasionally, a sweet, plump 18-year-old would be turned on by the coach. Like the boy who turned up his bottom to Coach Brown and pleaded, "Do me, coach, — DO ME."

■ 10004 HIS COCKSURE COUSIN

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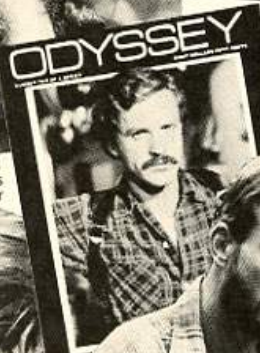
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ONE IN A MILLION (Continued from page 70)

A strange high on the street. The sense of myself — who I was, what I was doing — gave me a quick semi-hardon. As I swaggered along, stiff cock was pressed against stiff fabric. The comforting warmth between my legs (where I lived) spread to my brain.

On the bus I sat deliberately pulsating my cock. Studying my fellow passengers, I honest to God saw them. Shit, people tell you who they are. They show you. All you have to do is look and listen. So many people these days try to look "weird." True individuals on the other hand have the guts to unadorn themselves, to be in a sense, naked. Oh, sweet Jesus, how I'd love to be naked right this minute. I close my eyes and envision the scene. I observe it from someplace overhead...

...naked in the bus I stand. Rough tweeds brush against my flesh, hands pass over my body, exploring, caressing. Pressing himself against my back, my ass, a Bold One fingers my nipples, kisses my neck. A rhythm develops as he thrusts his tweed-covered body at baby white ass, scratching it pink. I feel his cock grow large. Twisting my head around, he kisses me, his tongue darting; mine responding, plunging deep. Deep spring kisses, saliva rivers. Turning me, he places large, rough hands on my ass. Our cocks find each other. Rough suit on naked flesh scratches my nipples, rubs red/raw my rock. My foreskin pulled back by anonymous hands (reaching from behind, between my legs) leaves cockhead pleased. Tweed-suited Bold One caresses, kisses, licks. His hands spread my cheeks and beckon for someone (all) to enter.

As they line up to fuck me, between kissing tongues, I whisper to my lover...

...long, hot cock inside me. Iron hard with blood. Pump it, man, into warm velvet ass. Make me slimy with sweat and sperm. Spread it over me, over my ass, my cock, rub it into my tits, under my arms, on my face. Let it envelop me.

"Give me the cocks, baby, all of them. Let young, hard cocks take me dog fashion. Let me shit out sperm as cocks recede, before others take their place. Sperm, run down my legs!

"Run like a mighty river, fill the streets for miles, rumbling in its flow. Let it draw men like a magnet, drive them mad with longing. Let them journey for miles, living on the sperm of those who have fucked me. Let them devour it, digest it into new sperm as they plow me, fuck the Cowboy King.

"Let animals come. Great wild stallions with cocks so full, so hard/large, they fill

me.

"Let the world fuck me!"

On the floor of the bus, in a pool of sperm, my lover, the Bold One, still in tweeds, fucks my farting, screaming asshole. On my knees, my face turned to one side, my hair and cheek resting in sperm, he fucks with huge stallion cock. Turning me on my back, holding outstretched legs by the ankles, he gets full extension. In and out. In. Out. (A locomotive whistles through a shit darkened tunnel.) Leaning forward, gasping, he explodes. Come rushes to my stomach, my fingertips, my



brain. I taste it on his lips.

We lie exhausted — he in tweed, I naked. Covered with sperm, we stick to one another, the come of countless unknown men.

Here it is. Bad, run-down tenement; front door open. Up the stairs, counting unmarked floors. Badly lit, dirty years-ago painted halls. Top floor, quietly (because my heart is beating so.) Out of breath, slowly down the hall. There is the name. I take my time, as much as I need.

Then, I am ready. Softly I knock. No answer. Was it a joke? Again I knock. I hear a voice; the door opens.

"Sorry," he says. "Come in."

He is perhaps forty, salt and pepper hair, beautiful. (Small apartment, dirty. I don't think he lives here.)

"Sit down."

I do. Among clutter, pictures of naked young men — in magazines, or photos mailed — applications. He studies me.

"How tall are you?"

"Five eleven." He writes it down.

"Weight?"

"One fifty-five."

"Age?"

"Twenty-four."

"Take off your clothes."

I do.

"Turn around. Slowly."

I hear only his breathing. (His eyes on

me cause cock to stiffen. A string of juice drips to my thigh.)

"Okay," he says. There is a slight curling of his lips. "How late can I call you?"

"Doesn't matter."

He takes a deep breath. "Thanks for coming by."

"Right."

Slowly I dress, forcing cock into the tight confines of my levis.

"If I get something for you, I'll give you a call." (There is a strange excitement in his voice.)

"Thank you."

"Thank you."

Outside, I can't figure him out — business voice on the phone, desire when he spoke to me in person. (His beautiful tweed suit is identical to the one I envisioned on the Bold One on the bus.)

I decide to walk home.

Jesus. Jesus Christ! Everybody and his brother is on the town tonight. Guys, suspended as if in purgatory, wander the streets offering their bodies.

Hey, who's this? Little weasel type, dressed in that same fucking tweed. He's damn shy, or he's acting it. No, he's shy all right, but at the same time, he's undressing me with his eyes. Yeah, man, watch out for the shy ones...

Okay, daddy, I say to myself, it's your move. Standing in a doorway, I outline my cock through my jeans. I grope myself a couple of times, all the while looking at Weasel. Our eyes lock, then his travel slowly to my crotch. Moistening nervous lips, he comes over.

Breathlessly, he asks, "How much?"

"Fifty."

"All right. Where?"

"We'll have to take a cab."

"I have my car."

"Great." It's a big custom job. I should have asked for more.

Driving up the street, stealing glances at me, what I have in my pants, he clears his throat. "You mind if I touch you? Now?"

"No."

"Slide over." I do and immediately he has my cock out of my pants.

"I think you'd better ... give me the money now."

"Don't you trust me?"

"No."

He digs out a fifty. After I pocket it, I reach over to unzip him.

"No."

"Just wanted to oblige..."

"No."

"Okay, man, it's your party."

God, I'm turned on! Riding through New York Town with my cock in this guy's hand is like being exposed to the whole fucking

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ONE IN A MILLION (Continued from page 91)

world. My jeans quickly around my ankles, I lean back and hungry fingers explore my balls, reach under to caress my asshole.

We got home, I get him upstairs and this is what he says: "Start out, just start out and pretend I'm not here. You know, take your clothes off, walk around, play with yourself. Do, say whatever you want." His voice sinking to a whisper, he adds, "Just like you were alone, amusing yourself. Understand?"

"Sure."

"Then later, later when you're ready to come, shoot on me — in my face, in my eyes!"

This was one God damn excited john. "You bet."

I was one God damn excited Cowboy, too, but I couldn't show it. The rules of the game say I'm supposed to supply the excitement, feel nothing.

"How long do I get?" the little guy asks.

"Hour."

He looks disappointed, but I know he really likes it, wants it this way. Hell, he's a john, isn't he?

Show time, I think in my head. I find music on the radio, light a cigarette and sit on the edge of my bed. (Weasel takes his place in a corner.) I study my image in the mirrored walls and those on the ceiling... my shoes off first, my socks. (The little guy has his cock out of his pants.) I adjust a baby spot to play directly on my body when I step into it. Hesitating a moment (shall I take off my shirt before I get in there or after?) I decide to peel it slowly inside the magic circle. I step in. The light is strong in my eyes. The reality of him is closed out (but I know he's there, I can feel him.)

I study myself in the mirrors, study the features of my face, mess up my hair a little to give it the proper casual look. Liking what I see, my Cowboy friend receives a friendly peck on his lips. (A gasp from the corner, followed by rapid beating of hard cock.) Moistening my lips, I look myself in the eyes, say, "You deserve this, baby. There's nobody who deserves it like you. I love you, you son of a bitch. You're one in a million..."

Oh, Jesus, it's so beautiful, the things flowing back and forth between us. Between me and my reflections, between the two of us and our john. We understand each other perfectly. We can do no wrong. Let it happen! Let it live!

Power, poise, control. Slowly I begin to raise my shirt, revealing the navel, rib cage, the fabulous pecs, the tits, the hair on my chest, arm pits, the arms themselves, the biceps! Posing, flexing the

(Continued on page 94)

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ONE IN A MILLION (Continued from page 92)

muscles, making them dance, feeling flesh alive, blood pulsing inside me. Animal noises reach my ears from the darkness. The pleasure it gives me! The pleasure of being paid, there is nothing like it! I am alive, totally, totally alive!

Cock needs air. He chokes from being too long buried. Tearing away that which keeps him prisoner. I love him, smell him, fill the air with him. His aroma reaches my nostrils — like contact with a narcotic — and he, too, is alive! (I want to fuck myself. I want my cock in my ass.)

With one hand, I reach around and force fingers up my asshole! Oh, God! I don't know where I begin, where I end. I kiss my image, want to fuck myself hard. I want to come. Moistening fingers with pre-come slime, my right hand pumps my cock, forces it nearer, nearer that beautiful Cowboy cock in the mirror. I am near, near. To hell with the guy in the corner, I make noises, I can't stop them, they come. It ... is ... unbelievable. (Beneath me, his glasses removed, the little guy lies on the floor, his head raised expectantly.)

Two bodies with hands shoved up asses spit forth come. Again, again. More! Endless, endless beauty. The john takes it, jerking around at my feet. He drains the last few drops in his mouth as my balls burst forth anew. Come rushes down his throat, gagging him, filling him, satisfying him.

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"Yes?"

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Silence for a while. "Yes."

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"Yes, several."

"That's what I'm asking."

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One in a million, I said to myself. A mil-

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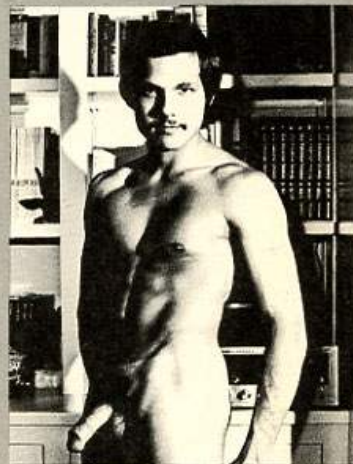


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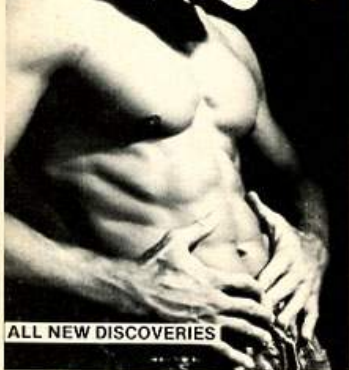
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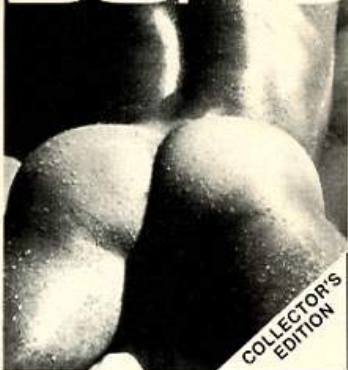


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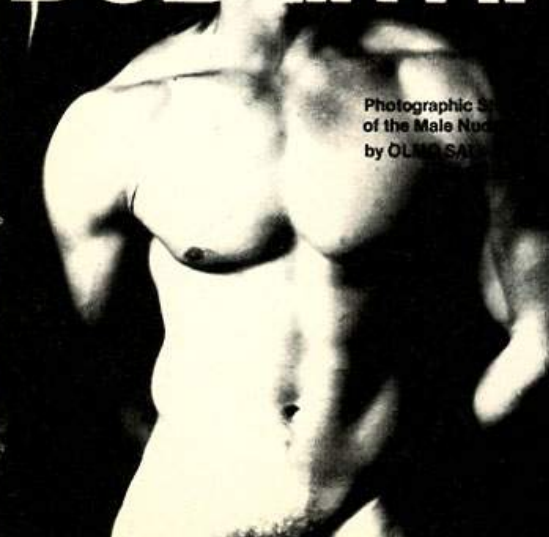
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VAIN ATTEMPTS (Continued from page 60)

our thirtieth birthdays, we happened onto a marvelous doctor in Beverly Hills who had developed a revolutionary technique with which he could create a cardio-facial response that, upon stoppage of the heart, would induce the facial muscles to smooth themselves instantaneously, and contract in such a way as to create a broad smile exposing a ten thousand dollar keyboard of exquisite dental work.

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I suggest that this preoccupation with the exterior self is widespread, disabling, pernicious, and sometimes lethal in the American gay male.

I also suggest that we, as brothers, are guilty of forcing one another into the mirrored corners of the sub-culture that we represent and reflect, and that my failure to win your approval by virtue of my visual acceptability insures full employment to cosmetologists and psychologists, and perpetuates the brutal reality that only the very attractive can participate.

It takes only a very small stirring of intelligence to see that the product of such a queer little society can only deny his essential self and live a counterfeit existence, paralyzed with Spike Lamont's notion that each of us is here to service the vision of others.

I am the only thing that belongs totally to me, and I'll be goddamned if I'm going to allow the justification for my existence to depend solely on the capricious dictates of a squad of face and fashion fanatics.

I am a human being first, a man second, and a gay man third; and I genuinely enjoy all three. I'm disgusted with myself for still not having progressed far enough along the road to self-acceptance to stop viewing myself as inadequate simply because I haven't washed my hair in the last twenty-four hours.

That's the stuff that creates artificial people and nasty, envious "queers." That's the stuff that smacks of the enemy, of perversion.

Again, I confess that I have no clear idea of how to solve the problem. I suspect that insecurity and fear of rejection are the key culprits. Yet I'm still optimistic enough to harbor the dark suspicion that love is the answer, and that self-love is the tantamount connection.

I'd be very disappointed if I felt that something like happiness were possible and I couldn't be part of it simply because I didn't meet the physical requisites set by my peer group.

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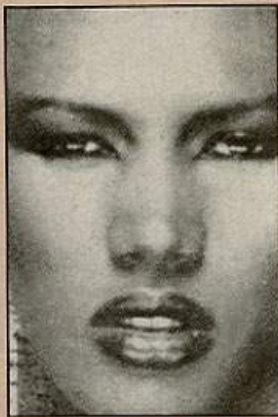
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Coming out with parents is difficult enough. Coming out on the job can often spell career suicide.

AN INTERVIEW WITH JAMES KIRKWOOD (Continued from page 89)

we're awaiting the development of some music before I do another. The film isn't a musical — not in the usual sense of musical numbers — but there will be some music in it."

"Of course, Bancroft is to do *Golda* — the play about Golda Meir this year, and if that's a hit, she'll have to stay with that at least a season. However, Twentieth has picked up the option on the Brooks project."

His new novel is the next major item on his work agenda. "It's one I began more than eight years ago. The title then was *The Angels or Whoever*; it was sold but then one editor on it died, and another retired, and then another quit, so the novel just got shoved back, and the time went by. I went on to *Good Times, Bad Times* after that and never got back to it. I've got to get onto it next, since I already have the advance for it. If I can get it done, it ought to be out next spring or maybe in the summer."

"It'll probably have a new title, one we'll find in the book, since the publishers seem to think that the old one is ... well, unwieldy."

"It's about ... well, it's a love story ... about a woman's last love affair ... and a

young man's first one. And it's accompanied by some bizarre experiences. There's to be quite a bit of explicit sex in the new book, since the affair means quite a lot to the young man."

Is the new novel also to come out of Kirkwood's personal experience?

"Yes, it's close to me ... but the book will be written in the third person. It'll be the first book I've done in third person. But the problem was that the protagonist — the young man — can't know everything that's happening. You see, there's an explorer of the woman's who's following them about ... so I had to write this one in third person."

Although several of Kirkwood's previous works have gay elements, he has not really written what might be termed an exclusively "gay" novel. Has he ever considered the possibility?

"Well ... yes, I have an idea, possibly, for such a work. Maybe I'll try it, get around to it someday. I just don't know."

He worked for a time last year on a new musical, *Club Mardi Gras*, out in California, but he finally pulled out of that project. "It was one of those things, you know, where they wanted the script written yesterday." He went on: "It was a good idea

for a show, but there was just too much pressure involved in a situation like that. A musical, even one with a good idea, needs time to be done right. The pressure ... who needs it?"

Last year was also marked by his initial appearances as a college and university lecturer. Kirkwood did a program he called "The Writer and His Work." In it, he detailed how so many of his own works have grown out of his own life. "Much of the writing I've done," he tells everyone, "has simply been an effort to gain perspective on problems and troubles of my own."

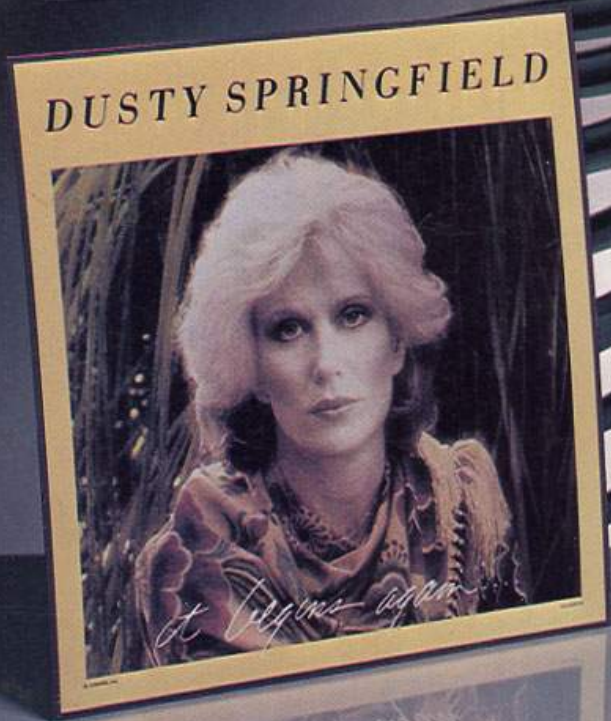
So, his writing has always been a kind of self-confrontation. There is a scene near the end of *Some Kind of Hero* in which the main character faces himself in just such a fashion, and he ponders the good and bad in everyone and in their lives and tries desperately to comprehend the "reality" of living. Again, the character might be Kirkwood speaking, for the author will tell you that in spite of the many confusions and difficulties of his early years, he has managed through his writing to maintain an optimistic philosophy toward life. "I still think life is worth living," Kirkwood states it bluntly — but affirmatively. ■

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